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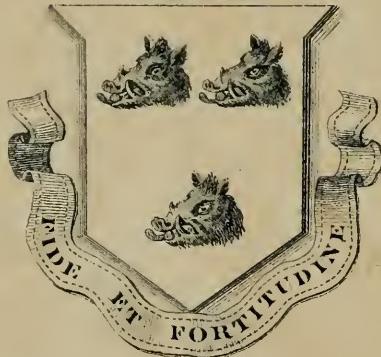
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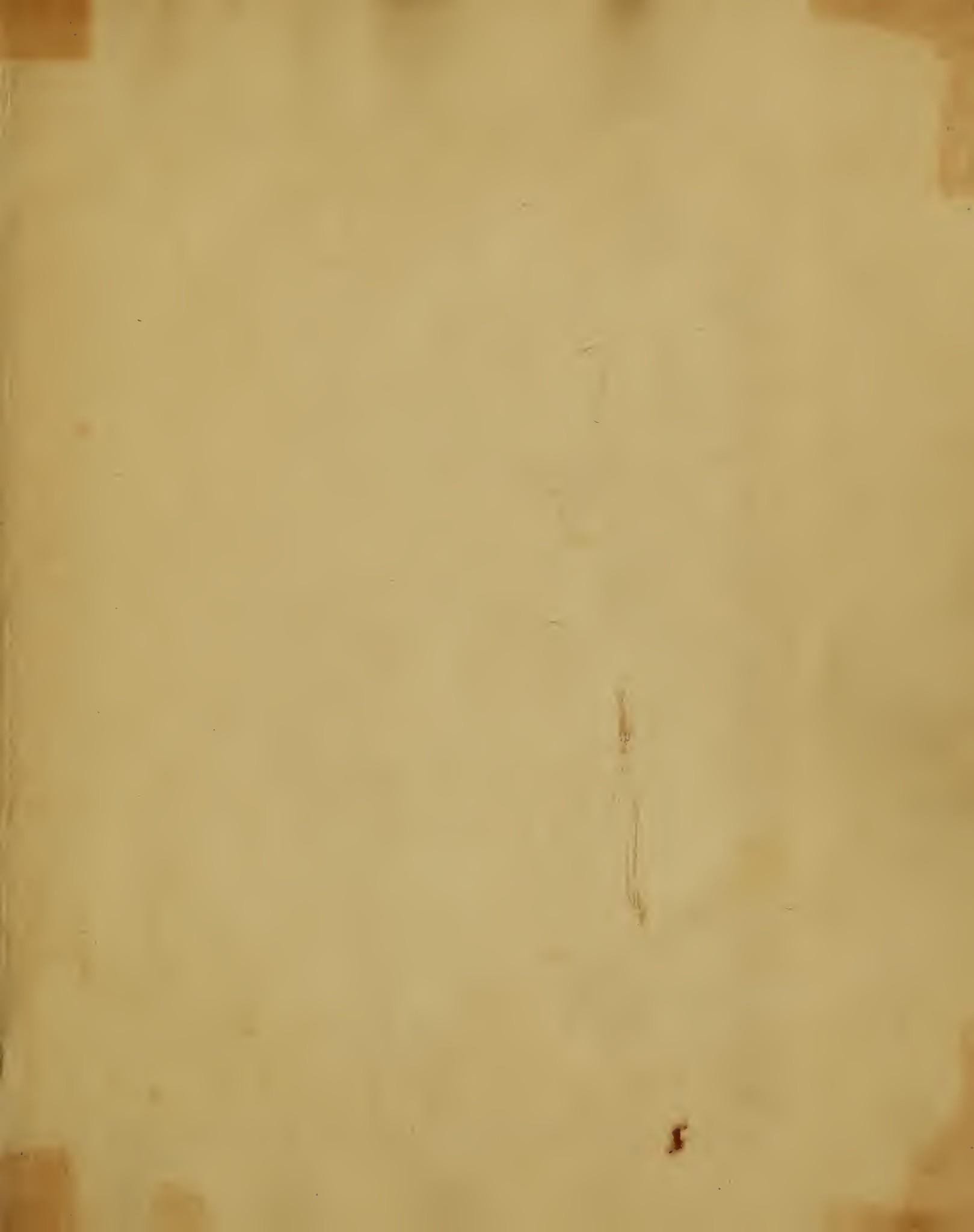


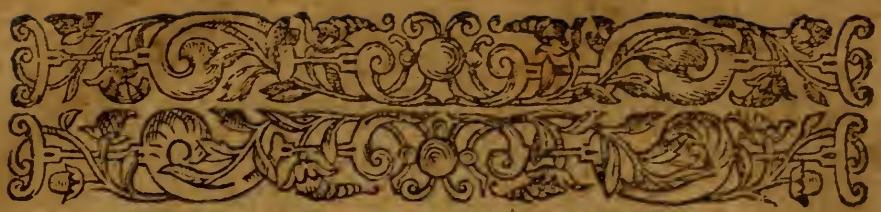
Thomas Pennant, Barton.

Boston Public Library.

Received, May, 1873.

Not to be taken from the Library.





Much adoe about Nothing.

*As it hath been sundrie times publikely
acted by the right honourable, the Lord
Chamberlaine his seruants.*

Written by William Shakespeare.

George Stevens



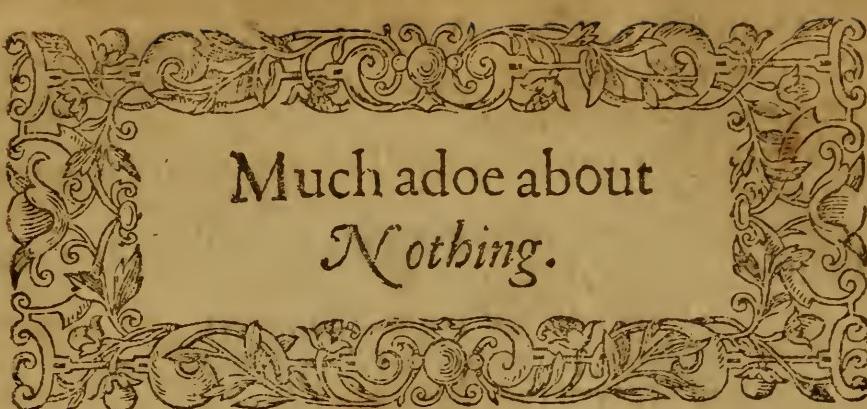
L O N D O N
Printed by V.S. for Andrew Wise, and
William Aspley,
1600.

149.957

May, 1873

of this play there is no other edition in Quarto.

D



Much adoe about Nothing.

Enter Leonato gouernour of Messina, Innogen his wife, Hero
his daughter, and Beatrice his neece, with a
messenger.

Leonato.

Learne in this letter, that don Peter of Arragon
comes this night to Messina.

Mess. He is very neare by this, he was not three
leagues off when I left him.

Leona. How many gentlemen haue you lost in this action?
Mess. But few of any sort, and none of name.

Leona. A victory is twice it selfe, when the atchier brings
home ful numbers: I find here, that don Peter hath bestowed
much honour on a yong Florentine called Claudio.

Mess. Much deseru'd on his part, and equally remembred
by don Pedro, he hath borne himselfe beyond the promise of
his age, doing in the figure of a lamb, the feats of a lion, he hath
indeed better bettred expectation then you must expect of me
to tell you how.

Leo. He hath an vnkle here in Messina will be very much
glad of it.

Mess. I haue already deliuered him letters, and there ap-
peares much ioy in him, euen so much, that ioy could not shew
itselfe modest enough, without a badge of bitterness.

Leo. Did he breake out into teares?

Mess. In great measure.

Vnuchadoe

Leo. A kind ouerflow of kindnesse, there are no faces truer
then those that are so washt, how much better is it to weepe at
joy, then to joy at weeping?

Beatr. I pray you, is Signior Mountanto returnd from the
warres or no?

Messen. I know none of that name, ladie, there was none
such in the army of any sort.

Leonato What is he that you aske for neece?

Hero My cosen meanes Signior Benedicke of Padua.

Mess. O hee's returnd, and as pleasant as euer he was.

Bea. He set vp his bills here in Messina, and challengde
Cupid at the Flight, and my vncles foole reading the chalenge
subscribde for Cupid, and challengde him at the Burbolt: I
pray you, how many hath he kild and eaten in these warres?
but how many hath he kild? for indeede I promised to eate all
of his killing.

Leo. Faith neece you taxe Signior Benedicke too much,
but heele be meet with you, I doubt it not.

Mess. He hath done good seruice lady in these warres.

Beat. You had musty vittaille, and he hath holpe to eate it,
he is a very valiaunt trencher man, he hath an excellent sto-
macke.

Mess. And a good souldier too, lady.

Beat. And a good souldiour to a Lady, but what is he to a
Lord?

Mess. A lord to a lord, a man to a man, stufft with al hono-
rable vertues.

Beat. It is so indeed, he is no lesse then a stuft man, but for
the stuffing wel, we are al mortall.

Leo. You must not, sir, mistake my neece, there is a kind
of mery warre betwixt Signior Benedicke and her, they never
meet but there's a skirmish of wit betweene them.

Beat. Alas he gets nothing by that, in our last conflikt, 4 of his
fife wits went halting off, and now is the whole man gouernd
with one, so that if he haue wit enough to keep himself warm,
let him beare it for a difference between himself and his horse,
for it is all the wealth that he hath left, to be known a reasona-

ble:

about Nothing.

ble creature, who is his companion now: he hath euery month
a new sworne brother.

Mess. Is't possible?

Beat. Very easilly possible, he weares his faith but as the fa-
shion of his hat, it euer changes with the next blocke.

Mess. I see lady the gentleman is not in your booke.

Beat. No, and he were, I would burne my study, but I pray
you who is his companion? is there no yong squarer now that
will make a voyage with him to the diuell?

Mess. He is most in the compagnie of the right noble Clau-
dio.

Beat. O Lord, he will hang vpon him like a disease, hee is
sooner caught than the pestilence, and the taker runs present-
ly madde, God help the noble Claudio, if he haue caught the
Benedict, it will cost him a thousand pound ere a be cured.

Mess. I will holde friends with you Ladie.

Beat. Do good friend.

Leon. You will neuer runne madde niece.

Beat. No, not till a hote January.

Mess. Don Pedro is approacht.

*Enter don Pedro, Claudio, Benedicke, Balthazar
and John the bastard.*

Pedro Good signior Leonato, are you come to meet your
trouble: the fashion of the world is, to auoyd cost, and you in-
counter it.

Leon. Neuer came trouble to my house, in the likenesse of
your grace, for trouble being gone, comfort should remaine;
but when you depart from mee, sorrow abides, and happines
takes his leaue.

Pedro You embrace your charge too willingly: I thincke
this is your daughter.

Leonato Her mother hath many times tolde me so.

Bened. Were you in doubt sir that you askt her?

Leonato Signior Benedicke, no, for then were you a child.

Pedro You haue it full Benedicke, wee may gheffe by this,
what you are, being a man, truely the Lady fathers her selfe:

Much adoe

be happy Lady, for you are like an honourable father.

Be. If Signior Leonato be her father, she would not haue his head on her shoulders for all Messina as like him as she is.

Beat. I wonder that you will still be talking, signior Benedicke, no body markes you.

Bene. What my deere lady Disdaine! are you yet liuing?

Bea. Is it possible Disdaine should die, while she hath such meete foode to feede it, as signior Benedicke? Curtesie it selfe must conuert to Disdaine, if you come in her presence.

Bene. Then is curtesie a turne-coate, but it is certaine I am loued of all Ladies, onelie you excepted: and I would I could finde in my heart that I had not a hard heart, for truely I loue none.

Beat. A deere happynesse to women, they would else haue beene troubled with a pernicious fater, I thanke God and my cold blood, I am of your humour for that, I had rather heare my dog barke at a crow, than a man sweare he loues me.

Bene. God keepe your Ladiship stil in that mind, so some Gentleman or other shall scape a predestinate scratcht face.

Beat. Scratching could not make it worse, and twere such a face as yours were.

Bene. Well, you are a rare parrat teacher.

Beat. A bird of my tongue, is better than a beast of yours.

Ben. I would my horse had the speed of your tongue, and so good a continuer, but keep your way a Gods name, I haue done.

Beat. You alwayes end with a iades tricke, I knowe you of olde.

Pedro. That is the summe of all: Leonato, signior Claudio, and signior Benedicke, my deere friend Leonato, hath inuited you all, I tell him we shall stay here, at the least a moneth, and he heartily prajes some occasion may detaine vs longer, I dare sweare he is no hypocrite, but prajes from his heart.

Leon. If you sweare, my lord, you shall not be forsworne, let mee bidde you welcome, my lord, being reconciled to the Prince your brother: I owe you all duetie.

John. I thanke you, I am not of many wordes, but I thanke you.

Leon.

about Nothing.

Leon. Please it your grace leade on?

Pedro Your hand Leonato, we wil go together.

Exeunt. Manent Benedicke & Claudio.

Clau. Benedicke, didst thou note the daughter of Signior

Bene. I noted her not, but I looke on her, (Leonato?)

Clau. Is she not a modest yong ladie?

Bene. Do you question me as an honest man should doe, for my simple true iudgement? or would you haue me speake after my custome, as being a professed tyrant to their sex?

Claudio No, I pray thee speake in sober iudgement.

Bene. Why yfaith me thinks shees too low for a lie praise, too browne for a faire praise, and too litle for a great praise, onlie this commendation I can affoord her, that were shee other then she is, she were vnhanisome, and being no other, but as she is, I do not like her.

Claudio Thou thinkest I am in sport, I pray thee tell mee truelie how thou lik'st her.

Bene. Would you buie her that you enquier after her?

Claudio Can the world buie such a iewel?

Bene. Yea, and a case to putte it into, but speake you this with a sad brow? or doe you play the flowting iacke, to tell vs Cupid is a good Hare-finder, and Vulcan a rare Carpenter: Come, in what key shall a man take you to go in the song?

Claudio In mine eie, shee is the sweetest Ladie that euer I lookt on.

Bened. I can see yet without spectacles, and I see no such matter: theres her cosin, and she were not possest with a fury, exceeds her as much in beautie, as the first of Maie dooth the last of December: but I hope you haue no intent to turne husband, haue you?

Claudio I would scarce trust my selfe, though I had sworne the contrarie, if Hero would be my wife.

Bened. Ist come to this? in faith hath not the worlde one man but he will weare his cappe with suspition? shall I neuer see a batcheller of three score againe? go to yfaith, and thou wilt needes thrust thy necke into a yoke, weare the print of it, and sigh away fundaies: looke, don Pedro is returned to seeke you.

Enter

Much adoe

Enter don Pedro, Iohn the bastard.

Pedro What secret hath held you here, that you followed
not to Leonatoes?

Bene. I would your Grace would constraine me to tell.

Pedro. I charge thee on thy allegiance.

Ben. You heare, Count Claudio, I can be secret as a dumb
man, I woulde haue you thinke so (but on my allegiance,
marke you this, on my allegiance) he is in loue, with who? now
that is your Graces part: marke how short his answer is, with
Hero Leonatoes short daughter.

Clau. If this were so, so were it vttred.

Bened. Like the olde tale, my Lord, it is not so, nor twas
not so: but indeede, God forbid it should be so.

Claudio If my passion change not shortly, God forbid it
should be otherwise.

Pedro Amen, if you loue her, for the Lady is very well
worthy.

Claudio You speake this to fetch me in, my Lord.

Pedro By my troth I speake my thought.

Claudio And in faith, my Lord, I spoke mine.

Bened. And by my two faiths and troths, my Lorde, I
spoke mine.

Clau. That I loue her, I feele.

Pedro That she is worthy, I know.

Bened. That I neither feele how she should be loued, nor
know how she should be worthie, is the opinion that fire can
not melt out of me, I will die in it at the stake.

Pedro Thou wast euer an obstinate heretique in the de-
spight of Beauty.

Clau. And neuer could maintaine his part, but in the force
of his wil.

Bene. That a woman conceiued me, I thanke her: that she
brought me vp, I likewise giue her most humble thankes: but
that I will haue a rechate winded in my forehead, or hang my
bugle in an inuisible baldricke, all women shall pardon mee:
because I will not doe them the wrong to mistrust any, I will
doe my selfe the right to trust none: and the fine is, (for the
which

about Nothing.

which I may go the fater,) I will liue a bachelier.

Pedro I shall see thee ere I die, looke pale with loue.

Bene. With anger, with sickenesse, or with hunger, my Lord, not with loue: proue that euer I loose more blood with loue then I will get againe with drinking, picke out mine eies with a Ballad-makers penne, and hang me vp at the doore of a brothel house for the signe of blinde Cupid.

Pedro Well, if euer thou dost fall from this faith, thou wilt prooue a notable argument.

Bene. If I do, hang me in a bottle like a Cat, and shooote at me, and he that hits me, let him be clapt on the shoulder, and calld Adam.

Pedro Well, as time shal trie: in time the sauage bull doth bear the yoake:

Bene. The sauage bull may, but if euer the sensible Benedicke bear it, plucke off the bulls hornes, and set them in my forehead, and let me be vildly painted, and in such great letters as they write, here is good horse to hyre: let them signifie vnder my signe, here you may see Benedicke the married man.

Claudio If this should euer happen, thou wouldest be horn madde.

Pedro Nay, if Cupid haue not spent all his quiuers in Venice, thou wilt quake for this shortly.

Bened. I looke for an earthquake too then.

Pedro Well, you will temporize with the howres, in the meane time, good signior Benedicke, repaire to Leonatoes, commend me to him, and tell him I will not faile him at supper, for indeede he hath made great preparation.

Bened. I haue almost matter enough in mee for such an Embassage, and so I committ you.

Clau. To the tuition of God: from my house if I had it.

Pedro The sixt of Iuly: your louing friend Benedicke.

Bened. Nay mocke not, mocke not, the body of your discourse is sometime guarded with fragments, and the guardes are but slightly basted on neither, ere you flowt old ends any further, examine your conscience, and so I leaue you. *exit*

B

Claudio

Claudio. My liege, your Highnesse nowe may doe mee
good.

Pedro. My loue is thine to teach, teach it but how,
And thou shalt see how apt it is to learne
Any hard lesson that may do thee good.

Claud. Hath Leonato any sonne, my lord?

Pedro. No childe but Hero, shees his onely heire:
Doost thou affect her Claudio?

Claudio. O my lord,
When you went onward on this ended action,
I lookt vpon her with a souldiers eie,
That likt, but had a rougher taske in hand,
Than to drieue liking to the name of loue:
But now I am returnde, and that warre-thoughts,
Haue left their places vacant: in their roomes,
Come thronging soft and delicate desires,
All prompting mee how faire yong Hero is,
Saying I likt her ere I went to warres.

Pedro. Thou wilt be like a louer presently,
And tire the hearer with a booke of words,
If thou dost loue faire Hero, cherish it,
And I wil breake with hir, and with her father,
And thou shalt haue her: wast not to this end,
That thou beganst to twist so fine a storie?

Claud. How sweetly you do minister to loue,
That know loues grieve by his complexion!
But leſt my liking might too ſodaine ſeeme,
I would haue ſalude it with a longer treatise.

Pedro. What need the bridge much broder then the flood?
The faireſt graunt is the neceſſitie:
Looke what wil ſerue is fit: tis once, thou louest,
And I wil fit thee with the remedie,
I know we ſhall haue reuelling to night,
I wil affuine thy part in ſome diſguife,
And tell faire Hero I am Claudio,
And in her bosome ile vncclaspe my heart,
And take her hearing prisoner with the force

And

about Nothing.

And strong encounter of my amorous tale:
Then after, to her father will I break,
And the conclusion is, she shal bethine,
In practise let vs put it presently.

excunt.

Enter Leonato and an old man brother to Leonato

Leo. How now brother, where is my chosen your sonne, hath
he prouided this musique?

Old He is very busie about it, but brother, I can tell you
strange newes that you yet dreamp't not of.

Leo. Are they good?

Old As the euent stampes them, but they haue a good co-
uer: they shew well outward, the prince and Count Claudio
walking in a thicke pleached alley in mine orchard, were thus
much ouer-heard by a man of mine: the prince discouered to
Claudio that he loued my niece your daughter, and meant to
acknowledge it this night in a daunce, and if he found her ac-
cordant, he meant to take the present time by the top, and in-
stantly break with you of it.

Leo. Hath the fellow any wit that told you this?

Old A good sharp fellow, I wil send for him, and question
him your selfe.

Leo. No, no, we wil hold it as a dreame til it appeare it self:
but I will acquaint my daughter withall, that she may bee the
better prepared for an answer, if peraduenture this be true: go
you and tel hir of it: coosins, you know what you haue to doe,
O I crie you mercie friend, go you with me and I wil vse your
shill: good cosin haue a care this busie time. *excunt.*

Enter sir John the bastard, and Conrade his companion.

Con. What the goodyere my lord, why are you thus out of
measure sad?

John There is no measure in the occasion that breeds, ther-
fore the sadness is without limit.

Con. You should heare reason.

John And when I haue heard it, what blessing brings it?

Con. If not a present remedy, at least a patient sufferance.

John I wonder that thou (being as thou saist, thou art, borne
vnder Saturne) goest about to apply a morall medicine, to a

mor-

Much adoe

mortifying mischiefe: I cannot hide what I am: I must be sad when I haue cause, and smile at no mans iests, eate when I haue stomach, and wait for no mans leisure: sleep when I am drowsie, and tend on no mans businesse, laugh when I am mery, and claw no man in his humör.

Con. Yea but you must not make the full shew of this till you may do it without controllment, you haue of late stoode out against your brother, and he hath tane you newly into his grace, where it is impossible you should take true root, but by the faire weather that you make your self, it is needful that you frame the season for your owne haruest.

John I had rather be a canker in a hedge, then a rose in his grace, and it better fits my bloud to be disdain'd of all, then to fashion a cariage to rob loue from any: in this (thogh I cannot be said to be a flatering honest man) it must not be denied but I am a plain dealing villaine, I am trusted with a mussel, and enfranchisde with a clogge, therfore I haue decreed, not to sing in my cage: if I had my mouth I would bite: if I had my liberty I would do my liking: in the mean time, let me be that I am, and seeke not to alter me.

Con. Can you make no vse of your discontent?

John I make all vse of it, for I vse it only,
Who comes here? what newes Borachio?

Enter Borachio.

Bor. I came yonder from a great supper, the prince your brother is royally entertain'd by Leonato, and I can giue you intelligence of an intended mariage.

John Wil it serue for any model to build mischiefe on? what is he for a foole that betrothes himselfe to vnquietnesse?

Bor. Marry it is your bothers right hand.

John Who, the most exquisite Claudio?

Bor. Euen he.

John A proper squier, and who, and who, which way looks he?

Bor. Marry one Hero the daughter and heire of Leonato.

John A very forward March-chicke, how came you to this?

Bor.

about Nothing.

Bor Being entertain'd for a perfumer, as I was smoaking a musty roome, comes me the prince and Claudio, hand in hand in sad conference: I whipt me behind the arras, and there heard it agreed vpon, that the prince should wooe Hero for himselfe, and hauing obtain'd her, giue her to Counte Claudio.

Iohn Come, come, let vs thither, this may proue food to my displeasure, that yong start vp hath all the glory of my ouerthrow: if I can crosse him any way, I blesse my selfe euery way, you are both sure, and wil assist me.

Conr. To the death my Lord.

Iohn Let vs to the great supper, their cheere is the greater that I am subdued, would the cooke were a my mind, shal we go proue whats to be done?

Bor. Weele wait vpon your lordship.

exit.

Enter Leonato, his brother, his wife, Hero his daughter, and Beatrice his neece, and a kinsman.

Leonato Was not counte Iohn here at supper?
brother I saw him not.

Beatrice How tartely that gentleman lookes, I never can see him but I am heart-burn'd an hower after.

Hero He is of a very melancholy disposition.

Beatrice He were an excellent man that were made iust in the mid-way between him and Benedick, the one is too like an image and saies nothing, and the other too like my ladies eldest sonne, euermore tatling.

Leonato Then halfe signior Benedickes tongue in Counte Johns mouth, and halfe Counte Johns melancholy in Signior Benedickes face.

Beatrice With a good legge and a good foote vncle, and money inough in his purse, such a man would winne any woman in the world if a could get her good will.

Leonato By my troth neece thou wilt never get thee a husband, if thou be so shrewd of thy tongue.

brother Infaith shees too curst.

Beatrice Too curst is mors then curst, I shall lessen

CVI UCP AAVE

Gods sending that way, for it is saide, God sends a curst cow
short hornes, but to a cow too curst, he sends none.

Leonato So, by being too curst, God will send you no
hornes.

Beatrice Iust, if he send me no husband, for the which bles-
sing, I am at him vpon my knees euery morning and euening:
Lord, I could not endure a husband with a beard on his face, I
had rather lie in the woollen!

Leonato You may light on a husband that hath no beard.

Beatrice What should I do with him, dresse him in my ap-
parell and make him my waiting gentlewoman? he that hath a
beard, is more then a youth: and he that hath no beard, is lesse
then a man: and he that is more then a youth, is not for me, and
he that is lesse then a man, I am not for him, therefore I will
euen take sixpence in earnest of the Berrord, and leade his
apes into hell.

Leonato Well then go you into hell.

Beatrice No but to the gate, and there will the diuell meeke
me like an old cuckold with hornes on his head, and say, get
you to heauen Beatrice, get you to heauen, heeres no place for
you maids, so deliuere I vp my apes and away to saint Peter: for
the heauens, he shewes me where the Batchellers sit, and there
live we as mery as the day is long.

brother Well neece, I trust you will be rulde by your fa-
ther.

Beatrice Yes faith, it is my cosens duetie to make cursie and
say, father, as it please you: but yet for all that cosin, let him be a
handsome fellow, or else make an other cursie, and say, father,
as it please me.

Leonato Well neece, I hope to see you one day fitted with a
husband.

Beatrice Not til God make men of some other mettal then
earth; would it not grieue a woman to be ouer-masterd with
a peece of valiant dust? to make an account of her life to a clod
of waiward marle? no vnckle, ile none: Adams sonnes are my
brethren, and truely I holde it a sinne to match in my kin-
red.

Leonato

about Nothing.

Leonato Daughter, remember what I told you, if the prince do solicite you in that kind, you know your answer.

Beatrice The fault will be in the musique cosin, if you be not wooed in good time: if the prince be too important, tell him there is measure in euery thing, and so daunce out the answer, for here me Hero, wooing, wedding, and repenting, is as a Scotch ijjge, a measure, and a cinquepace: the first suite is hot and hasty like a Scotch ijjge (and ful as fantasticall) the wedding manerly modest (as a measure)full of state and aun- chentry, and then comes Repentance, and with his bad legs falls into the cinquepace faster and faster, til he sincke into his graue.

Leonato Cosin you apprehend passing shrewdly.

Beatrice I haue a good eie vncle, I can see a church by day-light.

Leonato The reuellers are entring brother, make good roome.

Enter prince, Pedro, Claudio, and Benedicke, and Balthaser,
or dumb Iohn.

Pedro Lady will you walke about with your friend?

Hero So, you walke softly, and looke sweetly, and say nothing, I am yours for the walke, and especially when I walk away.

Pedro With me in your company.

Hero I may say so when I please.

Pedro And when please you to say so?

Hero When I like your fauour, for God defend the lute should be like the case.

Pedro My visor is Philemons roofe, within the house is loue.

Hero Why then your visor should be thatcht.

Pedro Speake low if you speake loue.

Bene. Well, I would you did like me.

Mar. So would not I for your owne sake, for I haue many ill qualities.

Bene. Which is one?

Mar. I say my prayers alowd.

Bene.

VI UCD aace

Bene. I loue you the better, the hearers may cry Amen.

Marg. God match me with a good dauncer.

Balth. Amen.

Marg. And God keepe him out of my sight when the
daunce is done : answer Clarke.

Balth. No more words, the Clarke is answered.

Vrsula. I know you well enough, you are signior Antho-
nio.

Antho. At a word I am not.

Vrsula. I knowe you by the wagling of your head.

Antho. To tell you true, I counterfeit him.

Vrsula. You coulde neuer doe him so ill well, vntesse you
were the very man : heeres his drie hand vp and downe , you
are he, you are he.

Antho. At a word, I am not.

Vrsula. Come, come, do you think I do not know you by
your excellent wit? can vertue hide it selfe? go to, munme, you
are he, graces will appeere, and theres an end.

Beat. Will you not tell me who tolde you so?

Bened. No, you shall pardon me.

Beat. Nor will you not tell me who you are?

Bened. Not now.

Beat. That I was disdainefull, and that I had my good wit
out of the hundred mery tales: wel, this was signior Benedick
that said so.

Bened. Whats he?

Beat. I am sure you know him well enough.

Bened. Not I, beleue me.

Beat. Did he neuer make you laugh?

Bened. I pray you what is he?

Beat. Why he is the princes ieaster, avery dul fool, only his
gift is, in deuising impossible slauders, none but Libertines
delight in him, and the commendation is not in his wit, but in
his villanie, for he both pleases men and angers them, and then
they laugh at him, and beate him : I am sure he is in the Fleet,
I would he had boorded me.

Bene. When I know the Gentleman, ile tell him what you
say.

Beat.

about Nothing.

Beat. Do, do, heele but break a comparison or two on me,
which peraduēture, (not markt, or not laught at) strikes him in-
to melancholy, and then theres a partrige wing sauēd, for the
foole will eate no supper that night: wee must follow the lea-
ders.

Bene. In every good thing.

Beat. Nay, if they leade to any ill, I will leauē them at the
next turning. *Dance* *exeunt*

John Sure my brother is amorous on Hero, and hath with-
drawne her father to breake with him about it: the Ladies fo-
low her, and but one visor remaines.

Borachio And that is Claudio, I knowe him by his bear-
ing.

John Are not you signior Benedicke?

Claud. You know me well, I am he.

John Signior, you are very neere my brother in his loue, he
is enamourd on Hero, I pray you dissuade him from her, she
is no equall for his birth, you may doe the parte of an honest
man in it.

Claudio How know you he loues her?

John I heard him sware his affection.

Borac. So did I too, and he swore hee would marry her to
night.

John Come let vs to the banquet. *exeunt: manet Clau.*

Claud. Thus answer I in name of Benedicke,
But heare these ill newes with the eares of Claudio:
Tis certaine so, the Prince wodes for himselfe,
Friendship is constant in all other things,
Sauē in the office and affaires of loue:

Therefore all hearts in loue vse their owne tongues.

Let euery eie negotiate for it selfe,

And trust no Agent: for Beauty is a witch,

Against whose charmes, faith melteth into blood:

This is an accident of hourely proofe, *(dicke*

Which I mistrusted not: farewell therefore Hero. *Enter Bene-*

Benedicke Count Claudio.

Claudio Yea, the same.

Much adoe

Bene. Come, will you go with me?

Claudio Whither?

Bene. Euen to the next willow, about your owne busines, county: what fashion will you weare the garland of? about your necke, like an Vsurers chaine? or vnder your arme, like a Lieutenants scarffe? you must weare it one way, for the prince hath got your Hero.

Claudio I wish him ioy of her.

Benedicke Why that's spoken like an honest Drouier, so they sell bullockes: but did you thinke the Prince would haue serued you thus?

Claudio I pray you leauue me.

Benedicke Ho now you strike like the blindman, twas the boy that stole your meate, and youle beate the post.

Claudio If it will not be, ile leauue you.

exit

Benedicke Alas poore hurt foule, now will hee creepe into sedges: but that my Ladie Beatrice should know me, and not know mee: the princes foole! hah, it may be I goe vnder that title, because I am merry: yea but so I am apte to doe my selfe wrong: I am not so reputed, it is the base(though bitter) disposition of Beatrice, that puts the world into her person, and so giues me out: well, ile be reuenged as I may.

Enter the Prince, Hero, Leonato, John and Borachio,
and Conrade.

Pedro Now signior, wheres the Counte, did you see him?

Benedicke Troth my lord, I haue played the part of Ladie Fame, I found him heere as melancholy as a Lodge in a Warren, I tolde him, and I thinke I tolde him true, that your grace had got the goodwil of this yoong Lady, and I offred him my company to a willow tree, either to make hym a garland, as being forsaken, or to binde him vp a rod, as being worthie to bee whipt.

Pedro To be whipt, whats his fault?

Benedicke The flatte transgression of a Schoole-boy, who being ouer-joyed with finding a birds nest, shewes it his companion, and he steales it.

Pedro Wilt thou make a trust a transgression? the transgres-
sion,

about Nothing.

sion is in the stealer.

Benedicke Yet it had not beene amisse the rodde had beene made, & the garland too, for the garland he might haue worn himselfe, and the rodde he might haue bestowed on you, who (as I take it) haue stolne his birds nest.

Pedro I wil but teach them to sing, and restore them to the owner.

Benedicke If their singing answer your saying, by my faith you say honestly.

Pedro The ladie Beatrice hath a quarrell to you, the Gentleman that daunst with her, told her ihee is much wrongd by you.

Bened. O shee misusde me past the indurance of a blocke: an oake but with one greene leafe on it, would haue answered her: my very visor beganne to assume life, and scold with her: she tolde me, not thinking I had beene my selfe, that I was the Princes iester, that I was duller than a great thawe, huddleing iest vpon iest, with such impossible conuinciance vpon me, that I stooode like a man at a marke, with a whole army shooting at me: she speakes poynyards, and euery word stabbes: if her breath were as terrible as her terminations, there were no liuing neere her, shee would infect to the north starre: I woulde not marry her, though shee were indowed with al that Adam had left him before he transgreſt, she would haue made Hercules haue turnd spit, yea, and haue cleft his club to make the fire too: come, talke not of her, you shall find her the infernall Ate in good apparell, I would to God some scholler woulde coniure her, for certainlye while she is heere, a man may liue as quiet in hell, as in a sanctuarie, and people finne vpon purpose, because they woulde goe thither, so indeede all disquiet, horrour, and perturbation follows her.

Enter Claudio and Beatrice.

Pedro Looke heere she comes.

Benedicke Will your grace command me any feluice to the worldes end? I will go on the slightest arrand now to the Antyodes that you can deuise to send mee on: I will fetch you a tooth-picker now from the furthest inch of Asia: bring you

Much adoe

the length of Prester Iohns foot: fetch you a haire off the great Chams beard : doe you any embassage to the Pigmies, rather than holde three words conference, with this harpy, you haue no imployment for me ?

Pedro None, but to desire your good company.

Benedicke O God sir, heeres a dish I loue not, I cannot indure my Ladie Tongue. exit.

Pedro Come Lady, come, you haue lost the heart of signior Benedicke.

Beatrice Indeed my Lord, he lent it me awhile, and I gaue him vse for it, a double heart for his single one, mary once before he wonne it of me, with false dice , therefore your grace may well say I haue lost it.

Pedro You haue put him downe Lady, you haue put him downe.

Beatrice So I would not he should do me, my Lord, lest I should prooue the mother of fooles : I haue brought Counte Claudio, whom you sent me to seeke.

Pedro Why how now Counte, wherefore are you sad?

Claudio Not sad my Lord.

Pedro How then? sicke?

Claudio Neither, my Lord.

Beatrice The Counte is neither sad, nor sicke, nor merry, nor well : but ciuill Counte, ciuil as an orange, and something of that iealous complexion.

Pedro Ifaith Lady, I think your blazon to be true, though ile be sworne, if he be so, his conceit is false : heere Claudio, I haue wooed in thy name, and faire Hero is won, I haue broke with her father, and his good will obtained , name the day of marriage, and God giue thee joy.

Leonato Counte take of me my daughter, and with her my fortunes: his grace hath made the match, and all grace say Amen to it.

Beatrice Speake Counte, tis your Qu.

Claudio Silence is the perfectest Herault of joy, I were but little happy if I could say, how much? Lady, as you are mine, I am yours, I giue away my selfe for you, and doate vpon the exchange. Beatr.

about N othing.

Beat. Speake cosin, or (if you cannot) stop his mouth with a kisse, and let not him speake neither.

Pedro Infaith lady you haue a merry heart.

Beatr. Yea my lord I thanke it, poore foole it keepes on the windy side of Care, my coofin tells him in his eare that he is in her heart

Clau. And so she doth coofin.

Beat. Good Lord for aliance : thus goes euery one to the world but I, and I am sun-burnt, I may sit in a corner and crie, heigh ho for a husband.

Pedro Lady Beatrice, I will get you one.

Beat. I would rather haue one of your fathers getting: hath your grace ne're a brother like you? your father got excellent husbands if a maide coulde come by them.

Prince Will you haue me? lady.

Beatr. No my lord, vnles I might haue another for working-daiies, your grace is too costly to weare every day: but I beseech your grace pardon me, I was born to speake all mirth, and no matter.

Prince Your silence most offends me, and to be merry, best becomes you, for out a question, you were borne in a merry hower.

Beatr. No sure my lord, my mother cried, but then there was a starre daunst, and vnder that was I borne, cosins God giue you ioy.

Leonato Neece, will you looke to those things I tolde you of?

Beat I crie you mercy vncle, by your graces pardon.

exit Beatrice.

Prince By my troth a pleasant spirited lady.

Leon. Theres little of the melancholy element in her my lord, she is neuer sad, but when she sleeps, & not euer sad then: for I haue heard my daughter say, she hath often dreamp't of vnhappines, and wakt her selfe with laughing.

Pedro She cannot indure to heare tell of a husband.

Leonato O by no meanes, she mockes al her wooers out of fute,

C VI MUSICO

Prince She were an excellent wife for Benedick.

Leonato O Lord, my lord, if they were but a weeke married,
they would talke themselues madde.

Prince Counte Claudio, when meane you to goe to
church?

Claud. To morow my lord, Time goes on crutches, til Loue
haue all his rites.

Leonato Not til monday, my deare sonne, which is hence a
iust seuerennight, and a time too briefe too, to haue al things an-
swer my mind.

Prince Come, you shake the head at so long a breathing,
but I warrant thee Claudio, the time shall not go dully by vs, I
wil in the interim, vndertake one of Hercules labors, which is,
to bring Signior Benedick and the lady Beatrice into a moun-
taine of affection, th'one with th'other, I would faine haue it a
match, and I doubt not but to fashion it, if you three will but
minister such assistance as I shall giue you direction,

Leonato My lord, I am for you, though it cost me ten nights
watchings.

Claud. And I my Lord.

Prince And you too gentle Hero?

Hero I wil do any modest office, my lord, to help my cosin
to a good husband.

Prince And Benedicke is not the vnhopefuller husband
that I know: thus farre can I praise him, he is of a noble strain,
of approoued valour, and confirmde honesty, I will teach you
how to humour your cosin, that she shall fal in loue with Be-
nedicke, and I, with your two helpes, wil so practise on Bene-
dicke, that in despight of his quicke wit, and his queasie sto-
macke, he shall fall in loue with Beatrice: if we can do this, Cu-
pid is no longer an Archer, his glory shall bee ours, for we are
the onely loue-gods, goe in with mee, and I will tell you my
drift.

exit.

Enter John and Borachio.

John It is so, the Counte Claudio shall marry the daughter
of Leonato.

Bora. Yea my lord, but I can crosse it.

John

about Nothing.

John Any barre, any crosse, any impediment, will be medicinable to me, I am sicke in displeasure to him, and whatsoeuer comes athwart his affection, ranges evenly with mine, how canst thou crosse this marriage?

Bor. Not honestly my lord, but so couertly, that no dishonesty shall appeare in me.

John Shew me briefely how.

Bor. I thinke I told your lordship a yeere since, how much I am in the fauour of Margaret, the waiting gentlewoman to Hero.

John I remember.

Bor. I can at any vnseasonable instant of the night, appoint her to looke out at her ladies chamber window.

John What life is in that to be the death of this mariage?

Bor. The poison of that lies in you to temper, goe you to the prince your brother, spare not to tell him, that he hath wronged his honor in marrying the renowned Claudio, whose estimation do you mightily hold vp, to a contaminated stale, such a one as Hero.

John What proofe shall I make of that?

Bor. Proofe enough, to misuse the prince, to vexe Claudio, to vndoe Hero, and kill Leonato, looke you for any other issue?

John Onely to dispright them I will endeuour any thing.

Bor. Go then, find me a meet houre, to draw don Pedro and the Counte Claudio alone, tell them that you know that Hero loues me, intend a kind of zeale both to the prince & Claudio (as in loue of your brothers honor who hath made this match) and his friends reputation, who is thus like to bee cosen'd with the semblance of a maid, that you haue discouer'd thus: they wil scarcely beleue this without triall: offer them instances which shall beare no lesse likelihood, than to see me at her chamber window, heare me call Margaret Hero, heare Marg. terme me Claudio, & bring them to see this the very night before the intended wedding, for in the mean time, I wil so fashion the matter, that Hero shal be absent and there shal appeere such seeming truth of Heroes disloyaltie, that iealousie shal be cald assurance

VI UCDAAOE

rance, and al the preparation ouerthrowne.

John Grow this to what aduerse issue it can, I will put it in practise: be cunning in the working this, and thy fee is a thousand ducates.

Bor. Be you constant in the accusation, and my cunning shall not shame me.

John I will presently go learne their day of marriage. *exit*

Enter Benedicke alone.

Bene. Boy.

Boy Signior.

Bene. In my chamber window lies a booke, bring it hither to me in the orchard.

Boy. I am here already sir.

exit.

Bene. I know that, but I would haue thee hence and here againe. I do much wonder, that one man seeing how much an other man is a foole, when he dedicates his behauours to loue, wil after he hath laught at such shallow follies in others, becom the argument of his owne scorne, by falling in loue, and such a man is Claudio, I haue knowne when there was no musique with him but the drumme and the fife, and now had he rather heare the taber and the pipe: I haue knowne when he would haue walkt ten mile afoot, to see a good armour, and now wil he lie ten nights awake caruing the fashion of a new dublet: he was woont to speake plaine, and to the purpose (like an honest man and a souldier) and now is he turnd ortography, his words are a very fantasticall banquet, iust so many strange dishes: may I be so conuerted and see with these eies? I cannot tell, I thinke not: I wil not be sworne but loue may transforme me to an oyster, but ile take my oath on it, till he haue made and oyster of me, he shall never make me such a foole: one woman is faire, yet I am well, an other is wise, yet I am well: an other vertuous, yet I am wel: but till all graces be in one woman, one womā shal not com in my grace: rich she shal be thats certain, wise, or ile none, vertuous, or ile never cheapen her: faire, or ile never looke on her, mild, or come not neare me, noble, or not I for an angell, of good discourse, an excellent musitian, and her haire

about Nothing.

haire shall be of what colour it please God. hah! the prince and monsieur Loue, I wil hide me in the arbor.

Enter prince, Leonato, Claudio, Musickē.

Prince Come shall we heare this musique?

Claud. Yea my good lord: how stil the euening is,
As husht on purpose to grace harmonie!

Prince See you where Benedicke hath hid himselfe?

Claud. O very wel my lord: the musique ended,
Weele fit the kid-foxe with a penny worth.

Enter Balthaser with musicke.

Prince Come Balthaser, weeble heare that song againe.

Balth. O good my lord, taxe not so bad a voice,
To slander musicke any more then once.

Prince It is the witnesse still of excellencie,
To put a strange face on his owne perfection,
I pray thee sing, and let me woe no more.

Balth. Because you talke of wooing I will sing,
Since many a wooer doth commence his sute,
To her he thinkes not worthy, yet he woves,
Yet will he sware he loues.

Prince Nay pray thee come,
Or if thou wilt hold longer argument,
Do it in notes.

Balth. Note this before my notes,
Theres not a note of mine thaths worth the noting.

Prince Why these are very crotchets that he speakes,
Note notes forsooth, and nothing.

Bene. Now diuine aire, now is his soule rauisht, is it not
strange that sheepe's guts shoule hale soules out of mens bo-
dies? well a horne for my mony when alls done.

The Song.

Sigh no more ladies, sigh no more,
Men were deceiuers euer,
One foote in sea, and one on shore,
To one thing constant neuer,
Then sigh not so, but let them go,
And be you blith and bonnie,

D

Con-

VI UCN adoe

Conuerting all your soundes of woe,
Into hey nony nony.

Sing no more ditties, sing no moe,
Of dumps so dull and heauy,
The fraud of men was euer so,
Since summer first was leauy,
Then sigh not so, &c.

Prince By my troth a good song.

Balth. And an ill singer my lord.

Prince Ha, no no faith, thou singst wel enough for a shife.

Ben. And he had bin a dog that should haue howld thus,
they would haue hangd him, and I pray God his bad voice
bode no mischeefe, I had as liue haue heard the night-rauen,
come what plague could haue come after it.

Prince Yea mary, doost thou heare Balthasar? I pray thee
get vs some excellent musique: for to morow night we would
haue it at the ladie Heroes chamber window.

Balth. The best I can my lord.

Exit Balthasar.

Prince Do so, farewell. Come hither Leonato, what was
it you told mee of to day, that your niece Beatrice was in loue
with signior Benedicke?

Cla. O I, stalke on, stalk on, the foule sits. I did neuer think
that lady would haue loued any man.

Leo. No nor I neither, but most wonderful, that she should
so dote on signior Benedicke, whome she hath in all outward
behaviors seemd euer to abhorre.

Bene. Ist possible? sits the wind in that corner?

Leo. By my troth my Lord, I cannot tell what to thinke of
it, but that she loues him with an enraged affection, it is past the
infinite of thought.

Prince May be she doth but counterfeit.

Claud. Faith like enough.

Leon. O God! counterfeit? there was neuer counterfeit of
passion, came so neare the life of passion as she discouers it.

Prince

about Nothing.

Prince Why what effects of passion shewes she?

Claud. Baite the hooke wel, this fish will bite.

Leon. What effects my Lord? she wil sit you, you heard my daughter tell you how.

Claud. She did indeede.

Prince How, how I pray you! you amaze me, I would haue thought her spirite had beene invincible against all assaults of affection.

Leo. I would haue sworne it had, my lord, especially against Benedicke.

Bene. I should think this a gull, but that the white bearded fellow speakes it: knavery cannot sure hide himself in such reuerence.

Claud. He hath taneth infection, hold it vp.

Prince Hath shee made her affection knowne to Benedicke?

Leonato No, and sweares shee neuer will, thats her torment.

Claudio Tis true indeed, so your daughter saies: shall I, saies she, that haue so oft encountered him with scorne, write to him that I loue him?

Leo. This saies she now when she is beginning to write to him, for sheel be vp twenty times a night, and there will she sit in her smocke, til she haue writ a sheete of paper: my daughter tells vs all.

Claud. Now you talk of a sheet of paper, I remember a pretie iest your daughter told of vs.

Leonato O when she had writ it, and was reading it ouer, she found Benedicke and Beatrice betweene the sheete,

Claudio That.

Leon. O she tore the letter into a thousand halfpence, raild at her self, that she should be so immodest to write, to one that she knew would flout her, I measure him, saies she, by my own spirit, for I should flout him, if he writ to me, yea though I loue him I should.

Claud. Then downe vpon her knees she falls, weepes, sobs, beates her heart, teares her haire, prayes, curses, O sweet Benedicke,

VI uch adoe

dicke, God giue me patience.

Leonato She doth indeed, my daughter saies so, and the extasie hath so much ouerborne her, that my daughter is sometime afear'd shee will doe a desperate out-rage to her selfe, it is very true.

Prince It were good that Benedicke knew of it by some other, if she will not discouer it.

Claudio To what end he would make but a sport of it, and torment the poore Lady worse.

Prince And he shoulde, it were an almes to hang him, shees an excellent sweete lady, and (out of all suspition,) she is vertuous.

Claudio And she is exceeding wise.

Prince In euery thing but in louing Benedicke.

Leonato O my Lord, wisedome and blood combating in so tender a body, we haue ten proofes to one, that bloud hath the victory, I am sory for her, as I haue iust cause, beeing her vncle, and her gardian.

Prince I wold shee had bestowed this dotage on mee, I wold haue daft all other respects, and made her halfe my self: I pray you tell Benedicke of it, and heare what a will say.

Leonato Were it good thinke you?

Claudio Hero thinkes surely she will die, for she sayes shee will die, if he loue her not, and shee will die ere shee make her loue knowne, and she will die if he wooe her, rather than shee will hate one breath of her accustomed crōsnesse.

Prince She doth well, if shee shoulde make tender of her loue, tis very possible heele scorne it, for the man(as you know all) hath a contemptible spirite.

Claudio He is a very proper man.

Prince He hath indeede a good outward happines.

Claudio Before God, and in my mind, very wise.

Prince Hee dooth indeede shew some sparkes that are like wit.

Claudio And I take him to be valiant.

Prince As Hector, I assure you, and in the manning of quarrels you may say he is wise, for either hee auoydes them with

about Nothing.

with great discretion, or vndertakes them with a most christi-anlike feare.

Leonato If he do feare God, a must necessarily keep peace, if hee breake the peace, hee ought to enter into a quarrel with feare and trembling.

Prince And so will hee doe, for the man doth feare God, howsoeuer it seemes not in him, by some large iestes hee will make: well I am sory for your niece, shall we go seeke Benedicke, and tell him of her loue?

Claudio Neuer tell him, my Lord, let her weare it out with good counsell.

Leonato Nay thats impossible, shee may weare her heart out first.

Prince Well, we will heare farther of it by your daughter, let it coole the while, I loue Benedicke wel, and I could wish he would modestly examine himselfe, to see how much he is vnworthy so good a lady.

Leonato My lord, will you walke? dinner is ready.

Claudio If he do not doate on her vpon this, I will neuor trust my expectation.

Prince Let there be the same nette spread for her, and that must your daughter and her gentlewomen carry: the sporte will be, when they holde one an opinion of an others dotage, and no such matter, thots the scene that I woulde see, which wil be mereley a dumbe shew: let vs send her to call him in to dinner.

Benedicke This can be no tricke, the conference was sadly borne, they haue the trueth of this from Hero, they seeme to pittie the Lady: it seemes her affections haue their full bent: loue me? why it must be requited: I heare how I am censurde, they say I will beare my selfe proudly; if I perceiue the loue come from her: they say too that she will rather die than giue anie signe of affection: I did neuer thinke to marry, I must not seeme proud, happy are they that heare their detractions, and can put them to mending: they say the Lady is faire, tis a trueth, I can beare them witnesse: and vertuous, tis so, I cannot reprooue it, and wise, but for louing me, by my troth it is

Much adoe

no addition to her wit, nor no great argument of her follie, for I will be horribly in loue with her, I may chaunce haue some odde quirkes and remnants of witte broken on me, because I haue railed so long against marriage: but doth not the appetite alter? a man loues the meate in his youth, that he cannot endure in his age. Shall quipes and sentences, and these paper bullets of the brain awe a man from the carreere of his humor? No, the wold must be peopled. When I saide I woulde die a batcheller, I did not think I shold liue til I were married, here comes Beatrice: by this day, shees a faire lady, I doe spie some markes of loue in her.

Enter Beatrice.

Beatr. Aganſt my will I am ſent to bid you come in to dinner.

Bene. Faire Beatrice, I thanke you for your paines.

Beat. I tooke no more paines for thoſe thankes, then you take paines to thanke me, if it had bin painful I woulde not haue come.

Bene. You take pleasure then in the message.

Beat. Yea iuft ſo much as you may take vpon a kniues point, and choake a daw withall: you haue no ſtomach signior, fare you well.

exit.

Bene. Ha, aganſt my will I am ſent to bid you come in to dinner: theres a double meaning in that: I took no more paines for thoſe thankes theſe you took pains to thank me, that's as much as to ſay, any pains that I take for you is as eaſy as thanks: if I do not take pitty of her I am a villain, if I do not loue her I am a Jew, I will go get her picture,

exit.

Enter Hero and two Gentlewomen, Margaret, and Ursley.

Hero Good Margaret runne thee to the parlour,
There ſhalt thou find my coſin Beatrice,
Propoſing with the prince and Claudio,
Whisper her eare and tell her I and Ursley,
Walke in the orchard, and our whole diſcourse
Is all of her, ſay that thou ouer-heardſt vs,
And bid her ſteale into the pleached bowere
Where hony-suckles ripened by the ſunne,

Forbid

about Nothing.

*Forbid the sunne to enter: like faourites,
Made proud by princes, that aduaunce their pride,
Against that power that bred it, there will she hide her,
To listen our propose, this is thy office,
Beare thee well in it, and leauē vs alone.*

Marg. Ile make her come I warrant you presently.

Hero Now Vrsula, when Beatrice doth come,
As we do trace this alleys vp and downe,
Our talke must onely be of Benedicke,
When I do name him let it be thy part,
To praise him more than euer man did merite,
My talke to thee must be how Benedicke,
Is sicke in loue with Beatrice: of this matter,
Is little Cupids crafty arrow made,
That onely wounds by heare-say: now begin,
For looke where Beatrice like a Lapwing runs
Close by the ground, to heare our conference.

Enter Beatrice.

Vrsula The pleasantest angling is to see the fish
Cut with her golden ores the siluer streme,
And greedily deuoure the treacherous baite:
So angle we for Beatrice, who euen now,
Is couched in the wood-bine couerture,
Feare you not my part of the dialogue.

Hero Then go we neare her that her eare loose nothing,
Of the false swete baite that we lay for it:
No truly Vrsula, she is too disdainfull,
I know her spirits are as coy and wild,
As haggerds of the rocke.

Vrsula But are you sure,
That Benedicke loues Beatrice so intirely?

Hero So saies the prince, and my new trothed Lord.

Vrsula And did they bid you tel her of it, madame?

Hero They did intreate me to acquaint her of it,
But I perswaded them, if they lou'de Benedicke,
To wish him wrastle with affection,
And neuer to let Beatrice know of it.

Vrsula

VI uch adoe

Vrsula Why did you so dooth not the gentleman
Deserue as full as fortunate a bed,
As euer Beatrice shall couch vpon?

Hero O God of loue! I know he doth deserue,
As much as may be yeelded to a man:
But nature neuer framde a womans hart,
Of powder stiffe then that of Beatrice:
Disdaine and Scorne ride sparkling in her eies,
Misprising what they looke on, and her wit
Valewes it selfe so highly, that to her
All matter els seemes weake: she cannot loue,
Nor take no shape nor project of affection,
She is so selfe indeared.

Vrsula Sure I thinke so,
And therefore certainly it were not good,
She knew his loue lest sheele make sport at it.

Hero Why you speake truth, I neuer yet saw man,
How wise, how noble, yong, how rarely featured.
But she would spel him backward: if faire faced,
She would sweare the gentleman should be her sister:
If blacke, why Nature drawing of an antique,
Made a foule blot: if tall, a launce ill headed:
If low, an agot very vildly cut:
If speaking, why a vane blowne with all winds:
If silent, why a blocke moued with none:
So turnes she euery man the wrong side out,
And neuer giues to Truth and Vertue, that
Which simplenesse and merite purchaseth.

Vrsula Sure, sure, such carping is not commendable,

Hero No not to be so odde, and from all fashions,
As Beatrice is, cannot be commendable,
But who dare tell her so? if I should speake,
She would mocke me into ayre, O she would laugh me
Out of my selfe, presse me to death with wit,
Therefore let Benedicke like couerd fire,
Consume away in sighes, waste inwardly:
It were a better death, then die with mockes,

Which

about Nothing.

Which is as bad as die with tickling.

Vrsula Yet tel her of it, heare what she wil say.

Hero No rather I will go to Benedicke,
And counsaile him to fight against his passion,
And truly ile deuise some honest slauders,
To staine my cosin with, one doth not know,
How much an ill word may impoison liking.

Vrsula O do not do your cosin such a wrong,
She cannot be so much without true iudgement,
Hauing so swift and excellent a wit,
As she is prilde to haue, as to refuse
So rare a gentleman as signior Benedicke.

Hero He is the onely man of Italy,
Alwaies excepted my deare Claudio.

Vrsula I pray you be not angry with me, madame,
Speaking my fancy: signior Benedicke,
For shape, for bearing argument and valour,
Goes formost in report through Italy.

Hero Indeed he hath an excellent good name.

Vrsula His excellency did earne it, ere he had it:
When are you married madame?

Hero Why every day to morrow, come go in,
Ile shew thee some attyres, and haue thy counsaile,
Which is the best to furnish me to morrow.

Vrsula Shees limed I warrant you,
We haue caught her madanie.

Hero If it proue so, then louing goes by haps,
Some Cupid kills with arrowes, some with traps.

Bat. What fire is in mine eares? can this be true?
Stand I condemn'd for pride and scorne so much?
Contempt, farewell, and maiden pride, adew,
No glory liues behind the backe of such.
And Benedicke, loue on I will requite thee,
Taming my wild heart to thy louing hand:
If thou dost loue, my kindnesse shall incite thee
To bind our loues vp in a holy band.
For others say thou dost deserue, and I

VI UCD aaoe

Beleeue it better then reportingly.

exit.

Enter Prince, Claudio, Benedicke, and Leonato.

Prince I doe but stay til your mariage be consummate, and then go I toward Arragon.

Claud. Ile bring you thither my lord, ifyoule vouchsafe me.

Prince Nay that would be as great a soyle in the new glosse of your marriage, as to shew a child his new coate and forbid him to weare it, I wil only be bold with Benedick for his company, for from the crowne of his head, to the sole of his foot, he is al mirth, he hath twice or thrice cut Cupides bow-string, and the little hang-man dare not shoot at him, he hath a heart as sound as a bell, and his tongue is the clapper, for what his heart thinkes, his tongue speaks.

Bene. Gallants, I am not as I haue bin.

Leo. So say I, me thinkes you are sadder.

Clau. I hope he be in loue.

Prince Hang him truant, theres no true drop of bloud in him to be truly toucht with loue, if he be sadde, he wantes mo-ney.

Bene. I haue the tooth-ach.

Prince Draw it.

Bene. Hang it.

Clau. You must hang it first, and draw it afterwards.

Prince What? sigh for the tooth-ach.

Leon. Where is but a humour or a worme.

Bene. Wel, euery one cannot master a griefe, but he that has it.

Clau. Yet say I, he is in loue.

Prince There is no appeerance offancie in him, vnlesse it be a fancy that he hath to strange disguises, as to be a Dutchman to day, a French man to morrow, or in the shape of two countiies at once, as a Germaine from the waste downward, all flops, and a Spaniard from the hip vpward, no dublet: vnlesse he haue a fancie to this foolery, as it appeares he hath, he is no foole for fancy, as you would haue it appeare he is.

Class.

about Nothing.

Claud. If he be not in loue with some woman, there is no belieuing old signes, a brushes his hat a mornings, what should that bode?

Prince Hath any man seene him at the Barbers?

Claud. No, but the barbers man hath bin seene with him, and the olde ornament of his cheeke hath already stufft tennis balls.

Leon. Indeed he lookes yonger than he did, by the losse of a beard.

Prince Nay a rubs himselfe with ciuit, can you smell him out by that?

Claud. Thats as much as to say, the sweete youthe's in loue.

Bene. The greatest note of it is his melancholy.

Claud. And when was he woont to wash his face?

Prince Yea or to paint himselfe? for the which I heare what they say of him.

Claud. Nay but his iesting spirit, which is now crept into a lute-string, and now governd by stops.

Prince Indeed that tells a heauy tale for him; conclude, conclude, he is in loue.

Claud. Nay but I know who loues him.

Prince That would I know too, I warrant one that knows him not.

Claud. Yes, and his ill conditions, and in dispight of al, dies for him.

Prince She shall be buried with her face vpwards.

Bene. Yet is this no charme for the tooth-ake, old signior, walke aside with me; I haue studied eight or nine wise wordes to speake to you, which these hobby-horses must not heare.

Prince For my life to breake with him about Beatrice.

Claud. Tis euens so, Hero and Margaret haue by this played their parts with Beatrice, and then the two beares will not bite one another when they meeete.

Enter John the Bastard.

Bastard My lord and brother, God sauе you.

Prince Good den brother.

VI uch adoe

Bastard If your leisure seru'd, I would speake with you.

Prince In priuate?

Bastard If it please you, yet Count Claudio may heare, for what I would speake of, concernes him.

Prince Whats the matter?

Bast. Meanes your Lordship to be married to morrow?

Prince You know he does.

Bast. I know not that when he knowes what I know.

Claud. If there be any impediment, I pray you discouer it.

Bast. You may think I loue you not, let that appeare hereafter, and ay me better at me by that I now will manifest, for my brother (I thinke, he holdes you well, and in dearenesse of heart) hath holpe to effect your ensuing mariage: surely sute ill spent, and labor ill bestowed.

Prince Why whats the matter?

Bast. I came hither to tel you, and circumstances shortned, (for she has bin too long a talking of) the lady is disloyall.

Claud. Who Hero?

Bastar. Euen she, Leonatoes Hero, your Hero, euery mans Hero.

Claud. Disloyall?

Bast. The word is too good to paint out her wickednesse, I could say she were worse, thinke you of a worse title, and I wil fit her to it: wonder not till further warrant: go but with me to night you shall see her chamber window entred, euen the night before her wedding day, if you loue her, then to morow wed her: But it would better fitte your honour to change your mind.

Claud. May this be so?

Prince I wil not thinke it.

Bast. If you dare not trust that you see, confesse not that you knowe: if you will follow mee, I will shew you enough, and when you haue seene more, and heard more, proceede accordingly.

Claudio If I see anie thing to night, why I should not marry her to morrow in the congregation, where I should wed, there will I shame her.

Prince

about Nothing.

Prince And as I wooed for thee to obtaine her, I wil ioyne
with thee, to disgrace her.

Bastard I will disparage her no farther, till you are my wit-
nesses, beare it coldely but till midnight, and let the issue shew
it selfe.

Prince O day vntowardly turned!

Cloud. O mischiefe strangely thwarting!

Bastard O plague right well preuented! so will you say,
when you haue seene the sequelle.

Enter Dogberry and his compartner with the Watch.

Dog. Are you good men and true?

Verges Yea, or else it were pity but they should suffer sal-
uation body and soule.

Dog. Nay, that were a punishment too good for them, if
they should haue any allegiance in them, being chosen for the
Princes watch.

Verges Well, giue them their charge, neighbour Dog-
berry.

Dogberry First, who thinke you the most desartlesse man
to be Constable?

Watch 1 Hugh Ote-cake sir, or George Sea-cole, for they
can write and reade.

Dogberry Come hither neighbor Sea-cole, God hath blest
you with a good name: to be a welfauoured man, is the gift of
Fortune, but to write and reade, comes by nature.

Watch 2 Both which maister Constable.

Dogberry You haue: I knew it would be your answer: wel,
for your fauour sir, why giue God thanks, and make no boast
of it, and for your writing and reading, let that appeere when
there is no neede of such vanity, you are thought heere to be
the most senslesse and fit man for the Constable of the watch:
therefore beare you the lanthorne: this is your charge, You
shall comprehend all vagrom men, you are to bidde any man
stand, in the Princes name.

Watch 2 How if a will not stand?

Dogberry Why then take no note of him, but let him goe,

E 3 and

Much adoe

and presently call the rest of the watch together, and thanke god you are ridde of a knaue.

Verges If he wil not stand when he is bidden, he is none of the Princes subiects.

Dogberry True, and they are to meddle with none but the Princes subiects : you shall also make no noise in the streetes: for, for the watch to babble and to talke, is most tollerable, and not to be indured.

Watch We will rather sleepe than talke, we know what belongs to a watch.

Dogberry Why you speake like an antient and most quiet watchman, for I cannot see how sleeping should offend: one-ly haue a care that your billes bee not stolne : well, you are to cal at al the alehouses, and bid those that are drunke get them to bed.

Watch How if they will not?

Dogberry Why then let them alone til they are sober, if they make you not then the better answer, you may say, they are not the men you tooke them for.

Watch Well sir.

Dogberry If you meeete a thiefe, you may suspect him, by vertue of your office, to be no true man: and for such kind of men, the lesse you meddle or make with them, why the more is for your honesty.

Watch If we know him to be a thiefe, shal we not lay hands on him?

Dogberry Truely by your office you may, but I thinke they that touch pitch will be defilde : the most peaceable way for you, if you doe take a thiefe, is, to let him shew himselfe what he is, and steale out of your companie.

Verges You haue beene alwayes called a mercifull manne, partner.

Dog. Truely I would not hang a dogge by my will, much more a man who hath anie honestie in him.

Verges If you heare a child crie in the night you must call to the nurse and bid her stil it.

Watch How if the nurse be asleepe and will not heare vs.

Dog.

about Nothing.

Dog. Why then depart in peace, and let the child wake her with crying, for the ewe that will not heare her lamb when it baes, will neuer answer a calfe when he bleates.

Verges Tis very true.

Dog. This is the end of the charge: you constable are to present the princes owne person, if you meeete the prince in the night, you may stay him.

Verges Nay birlady that I thinke a cannot.

Dog. Fiue shillings to one on't with any man that knowes the statutes, he may stay him, mary not without the prince be willing, for indeed the watch ought to offend no man, and it is an offence to stay a man against his will.

Verges Birlady I thinke it be so.

Dog. Haah ha, wel masters good night, and there be any matter of weight chaunces, cal vp me, keepe your fellowes counsailes, and your owne, and good night, come neighbour.

Watch Well masters, we heare our charge, let vs goe sitte here vpon the church bench till twoo, and then all to bed.

Dog. One word more, honest neighbors, I pray you watch about signior Leonatoes doore, for the wedding being there to morrow, there is a great coyle to night, adiew, be vigitant I beseech you.

exēunt.

Enter Borachio and Conrade.

Bor. What Conrade?

Watch Peace, stir not.

Bor. Conrade I say.

Con. Here man, I am at thy elbow.

Bor. Mas and my elbow icht, I thought there would a scabbe follow.

Con. I will owe thee an answer for that, and now forward with thy tale.

Bor. Stand thee close then vnder this penthouse, for it drissells raine, and I will, like a true drunckard, viter all to thee.

Watch Some treason masters, yet stand close.

Bor.

Bor. Therefore know, I haue earned of Dun John a thousand ducates.

Con. Is it possible that any villanie should be so deare?

Bor. Thou shouldest rather aske if it were possible any vilanie shuld be so rich: for when rich villains haue need of poor ones, poore ones may make what price they will.

Con. I wonder at it.

Bor. That shewes thou art vnconfirm'd, thou knowest that the fashion of a dublet, or a hat, or a cloake, is nothing to a man.

Con. Yes it is apparell.

Bor. I meane the fashion.

Con. Yes the fashion is the fashion.

Bor. Tush, I may as well say the foole's the foole, but seest thou not what a deformed theefe this fashion is?

Watch I know that deformed, a has bin a vile theefe, this viij. yeere, a goes vp and downe like a gentle man: I remember his name.

Bor. Didst thou not heare some body?

Con. No, twas the vane on the house.

Bor. Seest thou not (I say) what a deformed thief this fashion is, how giddily a turnes about all the Hot-blouds; between foureteene and ffeue and thirtie, sometimes fashioning them like Pharaoes souldiours in the rechie painting, sometime like god Bels priests in the old church window, sometime like the shauen Hércules in the smircht worm-eaten tapestry, where his cod-peeces seemes as massie as his club.

Con. Al this I see, and I see that the fashion weares out more apparrell then the man, but art not thou thy selfe giddy with the fashion too, that thou hast shifted out of thy tale into telling me of the fashion?

Bor. Not so neither, but know that I haue to night wooed Margaret the Lady Heroes gentle-woman, by the name of Hero, she leanes me out at her mistris chamber window, bids me a thousand times good night: I tell this tale vildly, I should first tel thee how the prince Claudio and my master planted, and placed, and possessed, by my master Don John, saw a farre off

about Nothing.

off in the orchard this amiable encounter.

Conr. And thought they Margaret was Hero?

Bar. Two of them did, the prince and Claudio, but the diuel my master knew she was Margaret, and partly by his othes, which first possest them, partly by the darke night which did deceiue them, but chiefly, by my villany, which did confirme any slander that Don John had made, away went Claudio entragde, swore he would meet her as he was apointed next morning at the Temple, and there, before the whole congregation shame her, with what he saw o're night, and send her home againe without a husband.

Watch 1 We charge you in the princes name stand.

Watch 2 Call vppe the right maister Constable, wee haue here recouerd the most dangerous peece of lechery, that euer was knowne in the common wealth.

Watch 1 And one Deformed is one of them, I know him, a weares a locke.

Conr Masters, masters.

Watch 2 Youle be made bring deformed forth I warrant you.

Conr Masters, neuer speake, we charge you, let vs obey you to go with vs.

Bor. We are like to proue a goodly commoditie, being taken vp of these mens billes.

Conr. A commodity in question I warrant you, come wee'll obey you. *exeunt.*

Enter Hero, and Margaret, and Ursula.

Hero Good Ursula wake my cosin Beatrice, and desire her to rise.

Ursula I wil lady.

Hero And bid her come hither.

Ursula Well.

Marg. Troth I thinke your other rebato were better.

Hero No pray thee good Meg, ile weare this.

Marg. By my troth's not so good, and I warrant your cosin will say so.

Hero My cosin's a foole, and thou art another, ile weare

F none

Much adoe

none but this.

Mar. I like the new tire within excellently, if the haire were a thought browner: and your gown's a most rare fashion yfaith, Isaw the Dutchesse of Millaines gowne that they praise so.

Hero. O that exceeds they say.

Marg. By my troth's but a night-gown it respect of yours, cloth a gold and cuts, and lac'd with siluer, set with pearles, downe sleevees, side sleevees, and skirts, round vnderborne with a blewifh tinsell, but for a fine queint graceful and excellent fa-
shion, yours is worth ten on't.

Hero. God giue me ioy to weare it, for my heart is exceed-
ing heauy.

Marg. T'will be heauier soone by the weight of a
man.

Hero. Fie vpon thee, art not ashamed?

Marg. Of what lady? of speaking honourably? is not marri-
age honourable in a beggar? is not your Lord honourable
without mariage? I thinke you would haue me say, sauing your
reuerence a husband: & bad thinking do not wrest true spea-
king, ile offend no body, is there any harm in the heauier, for a
husband? none I thinke, and it be the right husband, and the
right wife, otherwise tis light and not heauy, aske my lady Bea-
trice els, here she comes.

Enter Beatrice.

Hero. Good morrow coze.

Beat. Good morrow sweete Hero.

Hero. Why how now? do you speake in the fiske tune?

Beat. I am out of all other tune, me thinkes.

Mar. Clap's into Light a loue, (that goes without a burden,) do you sing it, and ile daunce it.

Beat. Ye Light alone with your heels, then if your husband
haue stables enough youle see he shall lacke no barnes.

Mar. O illegitimate construction! I scorne that with my
heels.

Beat. Tis almost five a clocke cosin, tis time you were rea-
dy, by my troth I am exceeding ill, hey ho.

Mar. For a hauke, a horse, or a husband?

Beat.

about Nothing.

Beat. For the letter that begins them al, H.

Mar. Wel, and you be not turnde Turke, theres no more sayling by the starre.

Beat. What meanes the foole trow?

Mar. Nothing I, but God send euery one their hearts desire.

Hero These gloues the Counte sent me, they are an excellent perfume.

Beat. I am stuft cosin, I cannot smell.

Mar. A maide and stuft! theres goodly catching of colde.

Beat. O God help me, God help me, how long haue you profest apprehension?

Mar. Euer since you left it, doth not my wit become me rarely?

Beat. It is not seene enough, you should weare it in your cap, by my troth I am sickle.

Mar. Get you some of this distill'd *carduus benedictus*, and lay it to your heart, it is the onely thing for a qualme.

Hero There thou prickst her with a thissel.

Beat. *Benedictus*, why *benedictus*? you haue some moral in this *benedictus*.

Mar. Morall? no by my troth I haue no morall meaning; I meant plaine holy thissel, you may thinke perchaunce that I think you are in loue, nay birlady I am not such a foole to think what I list, nor I list not to thinke what I can, nor indeed I can not think, if I would thinke my heart out of thinking, that you are in loue, or that you will be in loue, or that you can be in loue: yet Benedicke was such another, and now is he become a man, he swore he would never marry, and yet now in despight of his heart he eates his meate without grudging, and how you may be conuerted I know not, but me thinkes you looke with your eies as other women do.

Beat. What pace is this that thy tongue keepes?

Mar. Not a false gallop. Enter Ursula.

Ursula Madaine withdraw, the prince, the Count, signior Benedicke, Don Iohn, and all the gallants of the towne are

THE MURKIN

come to fetch you to church.

Hero. Help to dress me good coze, good Meg, good Ursula.

Enter Leonato, and the Constable, and the Headborough.

Leonato. What would you with me, honest neighbour?

Const. Dog. Mary sir I would haue some confidence with you, that decernes you nearely.

Leonato. Briefe I pray you, for you see it is a busie time with me.

Const. Dog. Mary this it is sir.

Headb. Yes in truth it is sir.

Leonato. What is it my good friends?

Con. Do. Goodman Verges sir speaks a little of the matter, an old man sir, and his wittes are not so blunt, as God helpe I would desire they were, but infaith honest, as the skin between his browes.

Head. Yes I thank God, I am as honest as any man living, that is an old man, and no honester then I.

Const. Dog. Comparisons are odorous, palabras, neighbour Verges.

Leonato. Neighbors, you are tedious.

Const. Dog. It pleases your worship to say so, but we are the poore Dukes officers, but truly for mine owne part, if I were as tedious as a King I could find in my heart to bestow it all of your worship.

Leonato. Al thy tediousnesse on me, ah?

Const. Dog. Yea, and t'were a thousand pound more than tis, for I heare as good exclamation on your worshippe as of any man in the citie, and though I be but a poore man, I am glad to heare it.

Head. And so am I.

Leonato. I would faine know what you haue to say.

Head. Mary sir our watch to night, excepting your worships presence, ha tane a couple of as arrant knaues as any in Messina.

Const. Dog. A good old man sir, he will be talking as they say, when the age is in, the wit is out, God help vs, it is a world

to

about Nothing.

to see: well said yfaith neighbour Verges, well, God's a good man, and two men ride of a horse, one must ride behind, an honest soule yfaith sir, by my troth he is, as euer broke bread, but God is to be worshipt, all men are not alike, alas good neighbour.

Leonato Indeed neighbour he comes too short of you.

Const. Dc. Gifts that God giues.

Leonato I must leauue you.

Const. Dog. One word sir, our watch sir haue indeede comprehended two aspitious persons, and wee woulde haue them this morning examined before your worship.

Leonato Take their examination your selfe, and bring it me, I am now in great haste, as it may appeare vnto you.

Constable It shall be suffigance. (exit)

Leonato Drinke some wine ere you goe : fare you well.

Messenger My lord, they stay for you, to giue your daughter to her husband.

Leon. Ile wait vpon them, I am ready.

Dogb. Go good partner, goe get you to Francis Sea-cole, bid him bring his penne and inckehorne to the Gaole : we are now to examination these men.

Verges And we must do it wisely.

Dogbery We will spare for no witte I warrant you : heeres that shall drive some of them to a noncoine, only get the learned writer to set downe our excommunication, and meet me at the Taile.

Enter Prince, Bastard, Leonato, Frier, Claudio, Benedicke, Hero, and Beatrice.

Leonato Come Frier Francis, be briefe, onely to the plaine forme of marriage, and you shall recount their particular duties afterwards.

Fran. You come hither, my lord, to marry this lady.

Claudio No.

Leo. To bee married to her : Frier, you come to marry her.

Frier Lady, you come hither to be married to this counte.

Hero I do.

Frier If either of you know any inward impediment why

Much a race

you should not be conioyned, I charge you on your soules to
utter it.

Claudio Know you any, Hero?

Hero None my lord.

Frier Know you any, Counte?

Leonato I dare make his answer, None.

Clau. O what men dare do! what men may do! what men
daily do, not knowing what they do!

Bene. Howe nowel interiections? why then, some be of
laughing, as, ah, ha, he.

Claudio Stand thee by Frier, father, by your leaue,
Will you with free and vnconstrained soule

Giue me this maide your daughter?

Leonata As freely sonne as God did giue her mee.

Claudio And what haue I to giue you backe whose woorth
May counterpoise this rich and pretious gift?

Princen Nothing, vnlesse you render her againe.

Claudio Sweete Prince, you learne me noble thankfulnes:
There Leonato, take her backe againe,
Giue not this rotten ornge to your friend,
Shee's but the signe and semblance of her honor:
Behold how like a maide she blushes heere!
O what authoritie and shew of truth
Can cumming sinne couer it selfe withall!
Comes not that blood, as modest euidence,
To witnesse simple Vertue? would you not sweare
All you that see her, that she were a maide,
By these exterior shewes? But she is none:
She knowes the heate of a luxurious bed:
Her blush is guiltinesse, not modestie.

Leonato What do you meane, my lord?

Claudio Not to be married,
Not to knit my soule to an approoued wanton.

Leonato Deere my lord, if you in your owne prooffe,
Haue vanquishit the resistance of her youth,
And made defeate of her virginitie.

Claudio I know what you would say: if I haue knowne her,
You

about Nothing.

You will say, she did imbrace me as a husband,
And so extenuate the forehand sinne: No Leonato,
I neuer tempted her with word too large,
But as a brother to his sister, shewed
Bashfull sinceritie, and comelie loue.

Hero And seemde I euer otherwise to you?

Claudio Out on thee seeming, I wil write against it,
. You seeme to me as Diane in her Orbe,
. As chaste as is the budde ere it be blowne:
But you are more intemperate in your blood,
Than Venus, or those pampered animalls,
That rage in fauage sensualitie.

Hero Is my Lord well that he doth speake so wide?

Leonato Sweete prince, why speake not you?

Prince What should I speake?
I stand dishonourd that haue gone about,
To lincke my deare friend to a common stale.

Leonato Are these things spoken, or do I but dreame?

Bastard Sir, they are spoken, and these things are true.

Bened. This lookest not like a nuptiall,

Hero True, O God!

Claud. Leonato, stand I here?

Is this the prince? is this the princes brother?

Is this face Heroes? are our eies our owne?

Leonato All this is so, but what of this my Lord?

Claud. Let me but moue one question to your daughter,
And by that fatherly and kindly power,
That you haue in her, bid her answer truly.

Leonato I charge thee do so, as thou art my child.

Hero O God defend me how am I beset,
What kind of catechising call you this?

Claud. To make you answer truly to your name.

Hero Is it not Hero, who can blot that name

With any iust reproch?

Claud. Marry that can Hero,

Hero it selfe can blot out Heroes vertue.

What man was he talkt with you yesternight,

Out at your window betwixt twelue and one?

Now

Much adoe

Now if you are a maide, answer to this,

Hero I talkt with no man at that hower my lord.

Prince Why then are you no maiden. *Leonato*,
I am sory you must heare: vpon mine honor,
My selfe, my brother, and this grieved Counte
Did see her, heare her, at that houre last night,
Talke with a ruffian at her chamber window,
Who hath indeede most like a liberall villaine,
Confest the vile encounters they haue had
A thousand times in secret.

John Fie, fie, they are not to be named my lord,
Not to be spoke of,
There is not chasteitie enough in language,
Without offence to vtter them: thus pretty lady,
I am sory for thy much misgouvernement.

Claud. O Hero! what a Hero hadst thou bin,
If halfe thy outward graces had bin placed,
About thy thoughts and counsailes of thy heart?
But fare thee well, most foule, most faire, farewell
Thou pure impietie, and impious puritie,
For thee ile locke vp all the gates of Loue.
And on my eie-liddes shall Coniecture hang,
To turne all beautie into thoughts of harme,
And neuer shall it more be gracious.

Leonato Hath no mans dagger here a point for me.

Beatrice Why how now cosin, wherfore sinke you down?

Bastard Come let vs go: these things come thus to light,
Smother her spirits vp.

Benedicke How doth the Lady?

Beatrice Dead I thinke, help vncle,
Hero, why *Hero*, vncle, signior Benedicke, Frier.

Leonato O Ease itake not away thy heauy hand,
Death is the fairest couer for her shame
That may be wisht for.

Beatrice How now cosin *Hero*?

Frier Haue comfort lady.

Leonato Dost thou looke vp?

Frier

about Nothing.

Frier Yea, wherefore shoulde she not?

Leonato Wherfore? why doth not euery earthly thing,
Cry shame vpon her? could she here deny
The story that is printed in her bloud?
Do not liue Hero, do not ope thine eies:
For did I thinke thou wouldest not quickly die,
Thought I thy spirates were stronger than thy shames,
My selfe would on the rereward of reproches
Strike at thy life. Grieued I I had but one?
Chid I for that at frugall Natures frame?
O one too much by thee: why had I one?
Why euer wast thou louely in my eies?
Why had I not with charitable hand,
Tooke vp a beggars issue at my gates,
Who sinirched thus, and mired with infamy,
I might haue said, no part of it is mine,
This shame deriuers it selfe from vnknowne loynes,
But mine and mine I loued, and mine I praisde,
And mine that I was proud on mine so much,
That I my selfe was to my selfe not mine:
Valewing of her, why she, O she is falne,
Into a pit of incke, that the wide sea
Hath drops too few to wash her cleane againe,
And salt too little, which may season giue
To her soule tainted flesh.

Ben. Sir, sir, be patient, for my part I am so attired in won-
der, I know not what to say.

Bear. O on my soule my cosin is belied.

Bene. Lady, were you her bedfellow last night?

Beat. No truly, not although vntill last night,
I haue this twelue month bin her bedfellow.

Leon. Confirm'd, confirm'd, O that is stronger made;
Which was before bard vp with ribs of yron,
Would the two princes lie, and Claudio lie,
Who loued her so, that speaking of her foulenesse,
Washt it with teares! hence from her, let her die.

Frier Hear me a little, for I haue only bin silent so long, &
giuen way vnto this course of fortune, by noting of the lady, I
haue markt,

*The fire open
the garment
the world in
a mans mind
the action
the life ??*

A thousand blushing apparitions,
To start into her face, a thousand innocent shames,
In angel whitenesse beat away those blushes,
And in her eie there hath appeard a fire,
To burne the errors that these princes hold
Against her maiden truth: call me a foole,
Trust not my reading, nor my obseruations,
Which with experimental seale doth warrant
The tenure of my booke: trust not my age,
My reuerence, calling, nor diuinitie,
If this sweete ladie lie not guiltlesse here,
Vnder some biting error.

*all about
so much like
to be a man
Note*

*her & her
the action*

*Cat and the
confess*

*Leonato Frier, it cannot be,
Thou seest that al the grace that she hath left,
Is, that she will not adde to her damnation,
A sinne of periury, she not denies it:
Why seekst thou then to couer with excuse,
That which appeares in proper nakednesse?*

Frier Lady, what man is he you are accusde of?

*Hero They know that do accuse me, I know none,
If I know more of any man alme
Then that which maiden modesty doth warrant,
Let all my sinnes lacke mercie, O my father,
Proue you that any man with me conuerst,
At hours vnmeet, or that I yesternight
Maintained the change of words with any creature,
Refuse me, hate me, torture me to death.*

Frier There is some strange misprision in the princes.

*Bene Two of them haue the very bent of honour,
And if their wisedomes be misled in this,
The practise of it liues in Iohn the Bastard,
Whose spirites toyle in frame of villanies.*

*Leonato I know not, if they speake but truth of her,
These hands shall teare her, if they wrong her honour,
The proudest of them shal wel heare of it.
Time hath not yet so dried this bloud of mine,
Nor age so eat up my inuention.*

Nor

about Nothing.

Nor Fortune made such haueocke of my meanes,
Nor my bad life refst me so much offriends,
But they shall find awakte in such a kind,
Both strength of limbe, and policy of mind,
Ability in meanes, and choise offriends,
To quit me of them throughly.

Frier Pawse awhile,
And let my counsell sway you in this case,
Your daughter here the princesse (left for dead,)
Let her awhile be secretly kept in,
And publish it, that she is dead indeede,
Maintaine a mourning ostentation,
And on your families old monument,
Hang mourneful epitaphes, and do all rites,
That appertaine vnto a buriall.

Leon. What shall become of this? what will this do?

Frier Mary this well caried, shall on her behalfe,
Change slander to remorse, that is some good,
But not for that dreame I on this strange course,
But on this trauaile looke for greater birth:
She dying, as it must be so maintaing,
Vpon the instant that she was accusde,
Shal be lamented, pittied, and excusde
Of euery hearer: for it so falls out.
That what we haue, we prize not to the worth,
Whiles we enjoy it, but being lackt and lost,
Why then we racke the valew, then we find
The vertue that possession would not shew vs
Whiles it was ours, so will it fare with Claudio:
When hee shall heare she died vpon his words,
Th Idæa of her life shall sweetly creepe,
Into his study of imagination,
And euery louely Organ of her life,
Shall come appareld in more precious habite,
More mouing delicate, and full of life,
Into the eie and prospect of his soule
Then when she liude indeed: then shall hee mourne,

lvi

VI such adoe

If euer loue had interest in his liuer,
And wish he had not so accused her:
No, though he thought his accusation true:
Let this be so, and doubt not but successse
Will fashion the euent in better shape,
Then I can lay it downe in likelihood.
But if all ay me but this be leuell false,
The supposition of the ladies death,
Will quench the wonder of her infamie.
And if it sort not wel, you may conceale her,
As best befits her wounded reputation,
In some reclusiue and religious life,
Out of all eies, tongues, minds, and injuries.

Bene. Signior Leonato, let the Frier aduise you,
And though you know my inwardnesse and loue
Is very much vnto the prince and Claudio,
Yet, by mine honor, I will deale in this,
As secretly and iustly as your soule
Should with your body.

Leon. Being that I flow in griefe,
The smallest twine may leade me.

Frier. Tis wel consented, presently away,
For to strange sores, strangely they straine the cure,
Come lady, die to liue, this wedding day
Perhaps is but prolong'd, haue patience and endure. *exit.*

Bene. Lady Beatrice, haue you wept al this while?

Beat. Yea, and I will weep a while longer.

Bene. I will not desire that.

Beat. You haue no reason, I do it freely.

Bene. Surely I do beleue your faire cosin is wronged.

Beat. Ah, how much might the man deserue of me that
would right her!

Bene. Is there any way to shew such friendship?

Beat. A very eu'en way, but no such friend.

Bene. May a man do it?

Beat. It is a mans office, but not yours.

Bene. I doe loue nothing in the worlde so well as you,

** about Nothing.*

is not that strange?

Beat. As strange as the thing I knowe not, it were as possible for me to say, I loued nothing so wel as you, but beleue me not and yet I lie not, I confesse nothing, nor I deny nothing, I am sory for my coosin.

Bened. By my sword Beatrice, thou louest me.

Beat. Do not sweare and eate it.

Bened. I will sweare by it that you loue me, and I wil make him eate it that sayes I loue not you.

Beat. Will you not eate your word?

Bened. With no fawce that can be deuised to it, I protest I loue thee.

Beat. Why then God forgiue me.

Bened. VVhat offence sweete Beatrice?

Beat. You haue stayed me in a happy houre, I was about to protest I loued you.

Bened. And do it with all thy heart.

Beat. I loue you with so much of my heart, that none is left to protest.

Bened. Come bid me doe any thing for thee.

Beat. Kill Claudio.

Bened. Ha, not for the wide world.

Beat. You kill me to deny it, farewell.

Bened. Tarry sweete Beatrice.

Beat. I am gone, though I am here, there is no loue in you, nay I pray you let me go.

Bened. Beatrice.

Beat. In faith I will go.

Bened. VVeele be friends first.

Beat. You dare easier be friends with mee, than fight with mine enemy.

Bened. Is Claudio thine enemy?

Beat. Is a not approoued in the height a villaine, that hath flaunded, scorned, dishonored my kinswoman? O that I were a man! what, beare her in hand, vntill they come to take handes, and then with publike accusation vncouerd flaunder, vnmittigated rancour? O God that I were a man! I woulde

C V I M I S S U N C

eate his heart in the market place.

Bened. Hear me Beatrice.

Beat. Talk with a man out at a window, a proper saying.

Bened. Nay but Beatrice.

Beat. Sweete Hero, she is wrongd, she is flaudred, shee is vndone.

Bened. Beat?

Beat. Princes and Countes! surely a princely testimonie, a goodly Counte, Counte Comfet, a sweete Gallant surely, O that I were a man for his sake! or that I had any friend woulde be a man for my sake! But manhoode is melted into cursies, valour into complement, and men are only turnd into tongue, and trim ones too: he is now as valiant as Hercules, that only telis a lie, and sweares it: I cannot be a man with wishing, therfore I will die a woman with grieuing.

Bened. Tarry good Beatrice, by this hand I loue thee.

Beatrice Use it for my loue some other way than swearing by it.

Bened. Thinke you in your soule the Count Claudio hath wrongd Hero?

Beatrice Yea, as sure as I haue a thought, or a soule.

Bened. Enough, I am engagde, I will challenge him, I will kisse your hand, and so I leaue you: by this hand, Claudio shal render me a deere account: as you heare of me, so think of me: goe comforde your coosin, I must say she is dead, and so fare-well.

Enter the Constables, Borachio, and the Towne clearke
in gownes.

Keeper Is our whole dissembly appeard?

Cowley O a stoole and a cushion for the Sexton.

Sexton Which be the malefactors?

Andrew Marry that am I, and my partner.

Cowley Nay thats certaine, we haue the exhibition to examine.

Sexton But which are the offenders? that are to be examined, let them come before maister constable.

Kemp Yea mary, let them come before mee, what is your name,

about Nothing.

name, friend?

Bor. Borachio.

Ke. Pray write downe Borachio. Yours firra.

Con. I am a gentleman sir, and my name is Conrade.

Ke. Write downe maister gentleman Conrade : maisters, do you serue God?

Both. Yea sir we hope.

Kem. Write downe, that they hope they serue God : and write God first, for God defend but God shoulde goe before such villainies: maisters, it is prooued alreadis that you are little better than false knaues , and it will go neere to be thought so shortly, how answer you for your selues?

Con. Mary sir we say, we are none.

Kemp. A maruellous witty fellowe I assure you , but I will go about with him: come you hither firra, a word in your eare sir, I say to you, it is thought you are false knaues.

Bor. Sir, I say to you, we are none.

Kemp VV el, stand aside, fore God they are both in a tale: haue you writ downe, that they are none?

Sexton Master constable, you go not the way to examine, you must call foorth the watch that are their accusers.

Kemp Yea mary , thats the eftest way, let the watch come forth: masters, I charge you in the Princes name accuse these men.

Watch 1 This man said sir, that don John the Princes brother was a villainie.

Kemp Write downe, prince John a villainie : why this is flat periurie, to call a Princes brother villainie.

Borachio Maister Constable.

Kemp Pray thee fellowe peace, I doe not like thy looke I promise thee.

Sexton VVhat heard you him say else?

Watch 2 Mary that he had receiued a thousand duckats of don John, for accusing the Ladie Hero wrongfully:

Kemp Flat burglarie as euer was committed.

Const. Yea by masse that it is.

Sexton VVhat else fellowe?

Watch

Watch I And that Counte Claudio did meane vpon his wordes, to disgrace Hero before the whole assemblie, and not marrie her.

Kemp O villaine! thou wilt be condemnd into euerlasting redemption for this.

Sexton VVhat else? *Watch* This is all.

Sexton And this is more masters then you can deny, prince Iohn is this morning secretlie stolne awaie : Hero was in this manner accusde, in this verie manner refusde, and vpon the grieve of this sodainlie died : Maister Constable, let these men be bound, and brought to Leonatoes, I will goe before and shew him their examination..

Constable Come, let them be opiniond.

Couley Let them be in the hands of Coxcombe.

Kemp Gods my life, wheres the Sexton? let him write down the Princes officer Coxcombe: come, bind them, thou naughtie varlet.

Couley Away, you are an asse, you are an asse.

Kemp Doost thou not suspect my place ? doost thou not suspect my yeeres? O that he were here to write me downe an asse! but maisters, remember that I am an asse, though it bee not written downe, yet forget not that I am an asse: No thou villaine, thou art full of pietie as shal be proude vpon thee by good witnes; I am a wise fellow, and which is more, an officer, and which is more, a houholder, and which is more; as prettily a peece offlesh as anie is in Messina, and one that knowes the Law, goe to, and a rich fellow enough, go to, and a fellow that hath had losses, and on that hath two gownes, and euery thing hanosome about him: bring him away: O that I had bin writ downe an asse!

exit.

Enter Leonato and his brother.

Brother If you go on thus, you will kill your selfe,
And tis not wisedome thus to second griefe,
Against your selfe.

Leonato I pray thee cease thy counsaile,
Which falles into mine eares as profitlesse,
As water in a syue: giue not me counsaile,

Nor

about Nothing.

Nor let no comforter delight mine eare,
But such a one whose wrongs doe sute with mine.
Bring me a father that so lou'd his child,
Whose ioy of her is ouer-whelmd like mine,
And bid him speake of patience,
Measure his woe the length and bredth of mine,
And let it answer euery straine for straine,
As thus for thus, and such a grieve for such,
In euery lineament, branch, shape, and forme:
If such a one will smile and stroke his beard,
And sorrow, wagge, crie hem, when he should grone,
Patch grieve with prouerbes, make misfortune druike,
With candle-wasters: bring him yet to me,
And I of him will gather patience:
But there is no such man, for brother, men
Can counsaile, and speake comfort to that grieve,
Which they themselues not feele, but tasting it,
Their counsaile turnes to passion, which before,
Would giue preceptiall medicine to rage,
Fetter strong madnesse in a silken thred,
Charme ach with ayre, and agony with words,
No, no, tis all mens office, to speake patience
To those that wring vnder the loade of sorrow
But no mans vertue nor sufficiencie
To be so morall, when he shall endure
The like himselfe: therefore giue me no counsaile,
My grieves crie lowder then aduertisement.

Brother Therein do men from children nothing differ.

Leonato I pray thee peace, I wil be flesh and bloud,
For there was neuer yet Philosopher,
That could endure the tooth-ake patiently,
How euer they haue writ the stile of gods,
And made a push at chance and sufferance.

Brother Yet bend not all the harme vpon your selfe,
Make those that do offend you, suffer too.

Leonato There thou speakest reason, nay I will do so,
My soule doth tell me, Hero is belied,

H

And

VI UP adoe.

And that shall Claudio know, so shall the prince,
And all of them that thus dishonour her.

Enter Prince and Claudio.

Brother Here comes the Prince and Claudio hastily.

Prince Good den, good den.

Claudio Good day to both of you.

Leonato Heare you my Lords?

Prince We haue some haste Leonato.

Leonato Some haste my lord! well, fare you well my lord,
Are you so hasty now? wel, all is one.

Prince Nay do not quarrel with vs, good old man.

Brother If he could right himselfe with quarrelling,
Some of vs would lie low.

Claudio Who wrongs him?

Leona. Marry thou dost wrong me, thou dissembler, thou:
Nay, neuer lay thy hand vpon thy sword, I haue spoken, and
I feare thee not.

Claudio Marry beshrew my hand,
If it should giue your age such cause of feare,
Infaith my hand meant nothing to my sword.

Leonato Tush, tush man, neuer fleere and iest at me,
I speake not like a dotard, nor a foole,
As vnder priuiledge of age to bragge,
What I haue done being yong, or what would doe,
Were I not old, know Claudio to thy head,
Thou hast so wrongd mine innocent child and me,
That I am forst to lay my reuerence by,
And with grey haires and bruise of many daies,
Do challenge thee to triall of a man,
I say thou hast belied mine innocent child.
Thy slander hath gone through and through her heart,
And she lies buried with her ancestors:
O in a toomb where neuer scandal slept,
Saue this of hers, framde by thy villanie.

Claudio My villany?

Leonato Thine Claudio, thine I say.

Prince You say not right old man.

Leonato

about Nothing.

Leonato My Lord, my Lord,
Ile prooue it on his body if he dare,
Dispight his nice fence, and his actiuе practise,
His Maie of youth, and bloomie of lustihood.

Claudio Away, I will not haue to doe with you.

Leonato Canſt thou ſo daffe me? thou haſt kild my child,
If thou kilſt me, boy, thou ſhalt kill a man.

Brother He ſhal kill two of vs, and men indeed,
But that's no matter, let him kill one first:
Win me and weare me, let him answer me,
Come follow me boy, come ſir boy, come follow me
Sir boy, ile whip you from your foyning fence,
Nay, as I am a gentleman I, will.

Leonato Brother.

Brother Content your ſelf, God knowes, I loued my neece,
And ſhe is dead, slandered to death by villaines,
That dare as well answer a man indeed,
As I dare take a ſerpent by the tongue,
Boyes, apes, braggarts, lackes, milke-sops:

Leonato Brother Anthony.

Brother Hold you content, what man! I know them, yea
And what they weigh, euen to the vtmoſt ſcruple,
Scambling, out-facing, fashion-monging boies,
That lie, and cogge, and flout, deprauē, and flaunder,
Go antiquely, and ſhew outward hidiousneſſe,
And ſpeakē of halfe a dozen dang'rous words,
How they might hurt their enemies, if they durſt,
And this is all.

Leonato But brother Anthonic.

Brother Come tis no matter,
Do not you meddle, let me deale in this.

Prince Gentlemen both, we will not wake your patience,
My heart is ſory for your daughters death:
But on my honour ſhe was chargde with nothing
But what was true, and very full of proofe.

Leonato My Lord, my Lord.

Prince I will not heare you.

C V L U C D A G O E

Leo. No come brother, away, I wil be heard. *Exeunt amb.*

Bro. And shal, or some of vs wil smart for it. *Enter Ben.*

Prince See see, heere comes the man we went to seeke.

Claud. Now signior, what newes?

Bened. Good day my Lord:

Prince Welcome signior, you are almost come to parte al-most a fray.

Claud. Wee had likt to haue had our two noses snapt off with two old men without teeth.

Prince Leonato and his brother what thinkst thou? had we fought, I doubt we shoulde haue beeene too yong for them.

Bened. In a false quarrell there is no true valour, I came to seeke you both.

Claud. We haue beeene vp and downe to seeke thee, for we are high prooife melancholie, and would faine haue it beaten away, wilt thou vse thy wit?

Bened. It is in my scabberd, shal I drawe it?

Prince Doest thou weare thy wit by thy side?

Claud. Neuer any did so, though very many haue been beside their wit, I will bid thee drawe, as wee doe the minstreis, draw to pleasure vs.

Prince As I am an honest man he lookes pale, art thou sicke, or angry?

Claud. What, courage man: what though care kild a catte, thou hast mettle enough in thee to kill care.

Bened. Sir, I shall meete your wit in the careere, and you charge it against me, I pray you chuse another subiect

Claud. Nay then give him another stasse, this last was broke crosse.

Prince By this light, he chaunges more and more, I thinke he be angry indeed.

Claud. If he be, he knowes how to turne his girdle.

Bened. Shall I speake a word in your care?

Claud. God blesse me from a challenge.

Bened. You are a villaine, I feast not, I will make it good howe you dare, with what you dare, and when you dare: doe mee right, or I will protest your cowardise: you haue killd a swete

about Notbing.

Sweete Lady, and her death shall fall heauie on you, let me
heare from you.

Claud. Well I wil meete you, so I may haue good cheare.

Prince What, a feast, a feast?

Claud. I faith I thanke him he hath bid me to a calves head
& a capon, the which if I doe not carue most curiously, say my
kniffe's naught, shall I not find a woodcocke too?

Bened. Sir your wit ambles well, it goes easily.

Prince Ile tell thee how Beatrice praisd thy witte the other
day: I said thou hadst a fine witte, true said she, a fine little one:
no said I, a great wit: right saies she, a great grosse one: nay said
I, a good wit, iust said she, it hurts no body: nay said I, the gen-
tleman is wise: certaine said she, a wise gentleman: nay said I, he
hath the tonges: that I beleue said shee, for he swore a thing
to mee on munday night, which hee forswore on tuesday morn-
ing, theres a double tongue theirs two tonges, thus did shee
an houre together trans-shape thy particular vertues, yet at last
shee cōcluded with a sigh, thou wast the properst man in Italy.

Claud. For the which shee wept heartily and saide shee ca-
red not.

Prince Yea that shee did, but yet for all that, and if shee did
not hate him deadly, shee would loue him dearely, the old mans
daughter told vs all.

Claud. All all, and moreouer, God sawe him when he was
hid in the garden.

Prince But when shall we set the sauage bulles hornes on
the sensible Benedicks head?

Claud. Yea and next vnder-neath, here dwells Benedick the
married man.

Bened. Fare you wel, boy, you know my minde, I wil leauue
you now to your gossep-like humor, you breake iests as brag-
gards do their blades, which God be thanked hurt not: my
Lord, for your many courtisies I thanke you, I must disconti-
nue your company, your brother the bastard is fled from Mes-
fina: you haue among you, kild a sweet and innocent lady: for
my Lord Lacke-beard, there hee and I shal meet, and till then
peace be with him,

VI UED ADOE

Prince He is in earnest.

Claudio In most profound earnest, and ile warrant you, for
the loue of Beatrice.

Prince And hath challengde thee.

Claudio Most sincerely.

Prince What a pretty thing man is, when he goes in his
dublet and hose, and leaues off his wit!

Enter Constables, Conrads, and Borachio.

Claudio He is then a Giant to an Ape, but then is an Ape a
Doctor to such a man.

Prince But soft you, let me be, plucke vp my heart, and be
sad, did he not say my brother was fled?

Const. Come you sir, if iustice cannot taine you, she shall
nere weigh more reasons in her ballance, nay, and you be a
cursing hypocrite once, you must be lookt to.

Prince How now, two of my brothers men bound? Bora-
chio one.

Claudio Harken after their offence my Lord.

Prince Officers, what offence haue these men done?

Const. Marie sir, they haue committed false report, moreo-
uer they haue spoken vni truths, secondarily they are slanders,
sixt and lastly, they haue belyed a Lady, thirdly they haue ve-
rifid vniust thinges, and to conclude, they are lying knaues.

Prince First I aske thee what they haue done, thirdly I
ask thee whats their offence, sixth and lastly why they are com-
mitted, and to conclude, what you lay to their charge.

Claud. Rightly reasoned, and in his owne diuision, and by
my troth theres one meaning wel futed.

Prince Who haue you offended maisters, that you are thus
bound to your answere? this learned Constable is too cunning
to be vnderstood, whats your offence?

Bor. Sweete prince, let me goe no farther to mine answere:
do you heare me, and let this Counte kill me: I haue deceiued
euen your very eyes: what your wisedoms could not discouer,
these shallow fooles haue broght to light, who in the night o-
uerheard me confessing to this man, how Don John your bro-
ther incensed me to slander the Lady Hero, howe you were
brought

about Nothing.

brought into the orchard; and saw me eourt Margaret in Her
roes garments, how you disgracde hir when you shoule marry
hir: my villany they haue vpon record, which I had rather seale
with my death, then repeate ouer to my shafne: the lady is dead
vpon mine and my masters false accusation: and briefely, I de-
sire nothing but the reward of a villaine.

Prince Runnes not this speech like yron through your
bloud?

Claud. I haue dronke poison whiles he ytterd it,

Prince But did my brother set thee on to this?

Bor. Yea, and paid me richly for the practise of it.

Prince He is composde and framde of treacherie,
And fled he is vpon this villanie.

Claud. Sweet Hero, now thy image doth appeare
In the rare semblance that I lou'd it first.

Const. Come, bring away the plaintifses, by this time our
sexton hath reformed Signior Leonato of the matter; and ma-
sters, do not forget to specifie when time and place shal serue,
that I am an asse.

Con. 2 Here, here comes master Signior Leonato; and the
sexton too.

Enter Leonato, his brother, and the Sexton.

Leonato Which is the villaine? let me see his eies,
That when I note another man like him,
I may auoide him: which of these is he?

Bor. If you would know your wronger, looke on me.

Leonato Art thou the slaye that with thy breath hast kill'd
Mine innocent child?

Bor. Yea, eu'en I alone.

Leo. No, not so villaine, thou beliest thy selfe,
Here stand a paire of honourable men,

A third is fled that had a hand in it:
I thanke you Princes for my daughters death,
Record it with your high and worthy deeds,
Twas brauely done, if you bethinke you of it.

Claud. I know not how to pray your pacience,
Yet I must speake, choose your reuenge your selfe,

Much adoe

Impose me to what penance your inuention
Can lay vpon my sinne, yet sinnd I not,
But in mistaking.

Prince By my soule nor I,
And yet to satisfie this good old man,
I would bend vnder any heauy waight,
That heele enioyne me to.

Leonato I cannot bid you bid my daughter liue,
That were impossible, but I pray you both,
Possesse the people in Messina here,
How innocent she died, and if your loue
Can labour aught in sad inuention,
Hang her an epitaph vpon her tooimb,
And sing it to her bones, sing it to night:
To morrow morning come you to my house,
And since you could not be my son in law,
Be yet my nephew: my brother hath a daughter,
Almost the copie of my child that's dead,
And she alone is heyre to both of vs,
Giue her the right you should haue giu'n her cosin,
And so dies my reuenge.

Claudio O noble sir!
Your ouer kindnesse doth wring teares from me,
I do embrace your offer and dispose,
For henceforth of poore Claudio.

Leonato To morrow then I wil expect your comming,
To night I take my leauue, this naughty man
Shal face to face be brought to Margaret,
Who I beleue was packt in al this wrong,
Hyred to it by your brother.

Bor. No by my soule she was not,
Nor knew not what she did when she spoke to me,
But alwayes hath bin iust and vertuous,
In anything that I do know by her.

Const. Moreouer sir, which indeede is not vnder white and
blacke, this plaintiffe heere, the offendour, did call me asse, I
beseech you let it be remembred in his punishment, and also
the

about Nothing.

the watch heard them talke of one Deformed, they say he weares a key in his eare and a locke hanging by it, and borows monie in Gods name, the which he hath vsde so long, & neuer paied, that now men grow hard hearted and wil lend nothing for Gods sake: prae you examine him vpon that point.

Leonato I thanke thee for thy care and honest paines.

Const. Your worship speakes like a most thankful and reverent youth, and I praise God for you.

Leon. Theres for thy paines.

Const. God saue the foundation.

Leon. Goe, I discharge thee of thy prisoner, and I thanke thee.

Const. I leauue an arrant knaue with your worship, which I beseech your worship to correct your selfe, for the example of others: God keepe your worship, I wish your worship well, God restore you to health, I humblie give you leauue to depart and if a merie meeting may be wisht, God prohibite it: come neighbour.

Leon. Vntill to morrow morning, Lords, farewell.

Brot. Farewell my lords, we looke for you to morrow.

Prince We will not faile.

Claud. To night ile mourne with Hero.

Leonato Bring you these fellowes on, weel talke with Margaret, how her acquaintance grew with this lewd felow. *exeunt*

Enter Benedicke and Margaret.

Bened. Praie thee sweete mistris Margaret, deserue well at my hands, by helping me to the speech of Beatrice.

Mar. Wil you then write me a sonnet in praise of my beautie?

Bene. In so high a stile Margaret, that no man liuing shall come ouer it, for in most comely trath thou deseruest it.

Mar. To haue no man come ouer me, why shal I alwaies keep below staires.

Bene. Thy wit is as quicke as the grey-hounds mouth, it catches.

Mar. And your's, as blunt as the Fencers foiles, which hit, but hurt not.

Much adoe

Bene. A most manly witte Margaret, it will nothurt a woman: and so I pray thee call Beatrice, I giue thee the bucklers.

Marg. Giue vs the swordes, wee haue bucklers of our owne.

Bene. If you vse them Margaret, you must putte in the pikes with a vice, and they are daungerous weapons for maides.

Mur. Well, I will call Beatrice to you, who I thinke hath legges.

Exit Margarite.

Bene. And therefore wil come. The God of loue that sits aboue, and knowes mee, and knowes me, how pittifull I deserue. I meane in singing. but in louing, Leander the good swimmer, Tioilus the first imployer of pandars, and a whole booke full of these quondam carpet-mongers, whose names yet runne smoothly in the euene rode of a blancke verse, why they were neuer so truly turnd ouer and ouer as my poore selfe in loue: mary I cannot shew it in rime, I haue tried, I can finde out no rime to Ladie but babie, an innocent rime: for scorne, horne, a hard rime: for schoole foole, a babling rime: very ominous endings, no, I was not borne vnder a riming plannet, nor I cannot woe in festiuall termes: sweete Beatrice wouldst thou come when I cald thee?

Enter Beatrice.

Beat. Yea signior, and depart when you bid me.

Bene. O stay but till then.

Beat. Then, is spoken: fare you wel now, and yet ere I goe, let me goe with that I came, which is, with knowing what hath past betweene you and Claudio.

Bene. Onely foule words, and therevpon I will kisse thee.

Beat. Foule words is but foule wind, and foule wind is but foule breath, and foule breath is noisome, therfore I wil depart vnkist.

Bene. Thou hast frightened the word out of his right fense, so forcible is thy wit, but I must tel thee plainly, Claudio vndergoes my challenge, and either I must shortly heare from him, or I will subscribe him a coward, and I pray thee now tell me, for

about Nothing.

for which of my bad parts didst thou first fal in loue with me?

Beat. For them all together, which maintaind so politique a state of euil, that they will not admitte any good part to intermingle with them: but for which of my good parts did you first suffer loue for me?

Bene. Suffer loue! a good epithite, I do suffer loue indeed, for I loue thee against my will.

Beat. In spight of your heart I thinke, alas poore heart, if you spight it for my sake, I will spight it for yours, for I wil never loue that which my friend hates.

Bene. Thou and I are too wise to woole peaceably.

Beat. It appeares not in this confession, theres not one wise man among twentie that will praise himselfe.

Bene. An old, an old instance Beatrice, that liu'd in the time of good neighbours, if a man do not erect in this age his owne toomb ere he dies, he shall liue no longer in monument, then the bell rings, and the widow weepes.

Beat. And how long is that thinke you?

Bene. Question, why an hower in clamour and a quarter in rhewme, therefore is it most expedient for the wise, if Don worme (his conscience) find no impediment to the contrary, to be the trumpet of his owne vertues, as I am to my selfe so much for praising my selfe, who I my selfe will beare witnes is praiseworthy, and now tell me, how doth your cosin?

Beat. Verie ill.

Bene. And how do you?

Beat. Verie ill too.

Bene. Serue God, loue me, and mend, there wil I leauie you too, for here comes one in haste. *Enter Ursula.*

Ursula Madam, you must come to your vncle, yonders old coile at home, it is prooued my Lady Hero hath bin falsely accusde, the Prince and Claudio mightily abusde, and Don Iohn is the author of all, who is fled and gone: will you come presently?

Beat. Will you go heare this newes signior?

Bene. I will liue in thy heart, die in thy lap, and be buried in thy eies: and moreouer, I wil go with thee to thy vncles. *exit.*

Enter Claudio, Prince, and three or four with tapers.

Claudio Is this the monument of Leonato?

Lord It is my Lord. *Epitaph.*

Done to death by slauderous tongues,
Was the Hero that heere lies:
Death in guerdon of her wronges,
Giues her fame which neuer dies:
So the life that dyed with shame,
Liues in death with glorious fame.

Hang thou there vpon the toomb,
Praising hir when I am dead.

Claudio Now musick sound & sing your solemne hymne.

Song Pardon goddesse of the night,
Those that flew thy virgin knight,
For the which with songs of woe,
Round abouther tombe they goe:
Midnight assist our mone, help vs to sigh & grone.
Heauily heauily.

Graues yawne and yeeld your dead,
Till death be vttered,

Heauily heauily. (right.)

Lo. Now vnto thy bones good night, yeerely will I do this

Prince Good morrow maisters, put your torches out,

The wolues haue preied, and looke, the gentle day

Before the wheeles of Phœbus, round about

Dapples the drowsie East with spots of grey:

Thanks to you al, and leaue vs, fare you well.

Claudio Good morrow masters, each his feuerall way.

Prince Come let vs hence, and put on other weedes,

And then to Leonatoes we will goe.

Claudio And Hymen now with luckier issue speeds,
Then this for whom we rendred vp this woe. *exeunt.*

Enter Leonato, Benedick, Margaret Ursula, old man, Frier, Hero.

Frier Did I not tell you shee was innocent?

Leo. So are the Prince and Claudio who accusd her,
Vpon the errour that you heard debated:

But Margaret was in some fault for this,

Although against her will as it appeares,

In

about Nothing.

In the true course of all the question.

Old Wel, I am glad that all things sorts so well.

Bened. And so am I, being else by faith enforst
To call young Claudio to a reckoning for it.

Leo. Well daughter, and you gentlewomen all,
Withdraw into a chamber by your selues,
And when I send for you come hither masked:
The Prince and Claudio promisde by this howre
To visite me, you know your office brother,
You must be father to your brothers daughter,
And give her to young Claudio.

Exeunt Ladies.

Old Which I will doe with confirmd countenance.

Bened. Frier, I must intreate your paines, I thinke.

Frier To doe what Signior?

Bened. To bind me, or vndo me, one of them:
Signior Leonato, truth it is good Signior,
Your niece regards me with an eye offauour.

Leo. That eye my daughter lent her, tis most true.

Bened. And I do with an eye of loue requite her.

Leo. The sight whereof I thinke you had from me,
From Claudio and the Pritice, but whats your will?

Bened. Your answe sir is enigmatical,
But for my wil, my will is, your good will
May stand with ours, this day to be conioynd,
In the state of honorable marriage,
In which (good Frier) I shal desire your help.

Leo. My heart is with your liking.

Frier And my helpe.

Heere comes the Prince and Claudio.

Enter Prince, and Claudio, and two or three other.

Prince Good morrow to this faire assembly.

Leo. Good morrow Prince, good morrow Claudio:
We heere attend you, are you yet determined,
To day to marry with my brothers daughter?

Claud. Ile hold my mind were she an Ethiope.

Leo. Call her foorth brother, heres the Frier ready.

P. Good morrow Bened, why whats the matter?

That you haue such a Februarie face,
So full of frost, of storme, and clowdinessse.

Claud. I think he thinkes vpon the sauage bull:
Tush feare not man, weelet thy hoynes with gold,
And all Europa shall reioyce at thee,
As once Europa did at lustie loue,
When he would play the noble beast in loue.

Bene. Bull loue sir had an amiable lowe,
And some such strange bull leapt your fathers cowe,
And got a calfe in that same noble feate,
Much like to you, for you haue iust his bleate.

Enter brother, Hero, Beatrice, Margaret, Ursula.

Claud. For this I owe you: here comes other recknings.
Which is the Lady I must seize vpon?

Leo. This same is she, and I do giue you her.

Claud. Why then shees mine, sweet, let me see your face.

Leon. No that you shall not till you take her hand,
Before this Frier, and sweare to marry hir.

Claud. Giue me your hand before this holy Frier,
I am your husband if you like of me.

Hero And when I liu'd I was your other wife,
And when you loued, you were my other husband.

Claud. Another Hero.

Hero Nothing certainer,
One Hero died defilde, but I do liue,
And surely as I liue, I am a maide.

Prince The former Hero, Hero that is dead.

Leon. She died my Lord, but whiles her flaunder liu'd.

Frier All this amazement can I qualifie,
When after that the holy rites are ended,
Ile tell you largely of faire Heroes death,
Meane time let wonder seeme familiar,
And to the chappell let vs presently.

Ben. Soft and faire Frier, which is Beatrice?

Beat. I answer to that name, what is your will?

Bene. Do not you loue me?

Beat. Why no, no more then reason.

Bene.

about Nothing.

Bene. Why then your vncle, and the prince, and Claudio,
Haue beene deceiued, they swore you did.

Beat. Do not you loue me?

Bene. Troth no, no more then reason.

Beat. Why then my cosin Margaret and Vrsula
Are much deceiu'd, for they did sweare you did.

Bene. They swore that you were almost sicke for me.

Beat. They swore that you were welnigh dead for me.

Bene. Tis no such matter, then you do not loue me.

Beat. No truly, but in friendly recompence.

Leon. Come cosin, I am sure you loue the gentleman.

Clau. And ile besworne vpon't, that he loues her,
For heres a paper written in his hand,
A halting sonnet of his owne pure braine,
Fashioned to Beatrice.

Hero And heres another,
Writ in my cosins hand, stolne from her pocket,
Containing her affection vnto Benedicke.

Bene. A miracle, heres our owne hands against our hearts:
come, I will haue thee, but by this light I take thee for pittie.

Beat. I would not denie you, but by this good day, I yeeld
vpon great perswasion, and parly to saue your life, for I was
told, you were in a consumption.

Leon. Peace I will stop your mouth.

Prince How dost thou Benedicke the married man?

Bene. Ile tel thee what prince: a colledge of witte-crackers
cannot flout me out of my humour, dost thou think I care for
a Satyre or an Epigramme? no, if a man will be beaten with
braines, a shall weare nothing h[an]somed about him: in briefe,
since I doe purpose to marrie, I will think nothing to anie pur-
pose that the world can saie against it, and therfore neuer flout
at me, for what I haue said against it: for man is a giddie thing,
and this is my conclusion: for thy part Claudio, I did thinke
to haue beaten thee, but in that thou art like to be my kinsman,
liue vnbruised, and loue my cousin.

Clau. I had wel hope thou wouldest haue denied Beatrice,
that I might haue cudgell'd thee out of thy single life, to make
thee

Much adoe

thee a double dealer, which out of question thou wilt be, if my coosin do not looke exceedingly narrowly to thee.

Bene. Come, come, we are friends, lets haue a dance ere we are maried, that we may lighten our own hearts, and our wiues heeles.

Leon. Weele haue dancing afterward.

Bene. First, of my worde, therefore plaie musicke, Prince, thou art sad, get thee a wife, get thee a wife, there is no stasse more reuerent then one tipt with horne.

Enter Messenger.

Mess. My Lord, your brother Iohn is tane in flight,
And brought with armed men backe to Messina.

Bene. Thinke not on him till to morrow, ile deuise thee
braue punishments for him: strike vp Pipers. dance.

F I N I S.



